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TOPICS AND EVENTS.

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OUR American cousins, thanks to their high Protective system, are burdened with a surplus of something like £11,000,000. The President, in his Message to Congress, details of which have come to hand this week, deprecates this state of things as a disturbing element in business. The bulk of this surplus is derived from Customs duties, and there appears to be no desire on the part of the President and his friends to effect a reform in this direction. Nor can it be expected that they should. He was elected as an opponent of tariff reform, beating ex-President Cleveland on that very question. It is no wonder that, notwithstanding high wages, the condition of the working population is not much better in the States than it is here. High wages are set off by the increased price of necessities, which arises from the protective duties put upon all foreign produce. In order to get over the difficulty the President is compelled to advise an increase of expenditure on the navy, advice which we cannot but regard as utterly mistaken and foolish. There is not much in the Message which calls for comment.

THE Council of the London Schools Dinner Association have issued an appeal for funds. Several existing agencies have agreed to merge their work in that of the new Central Association; others will keep up their separate organisations, but are willing to work in harmony. We are glad to see that there is no intention on the part of the Association to enable careless or indifferent parents to evade their responsibilities, but great care will have to be taken to prevent an improper use of the funds. A very large number of children go to school breakfastless or dinnerless, and that not unfrequently because the parents have not the wherewithal to provide the meal. Instruction under such conditions is a farce, nay, it is closely bordering on tragedy. We are not surprised under the circumstances to hear of demands for free breakfasts paid for out of the rates, but we hope that it will be a long time before this becomes a serious question. The work of such a society as the London Schools Dinner Association will do much to postpone if not altogether to destroy the necessity for any such demand. Even Free, or, as Lord Salisbury prefers to call it, Assisted Education will not meet the cases of those unfortunate children whose parents cannot provide them with physical food as a preparation for the mental food they are expected to get at the Primary Schools. We note that Sir Henry Peek, Bart., has given £100 to the Society.

THE great event of the week has been the annual meetings of the National Liberal Federation at Manchester. The gathering together of so large a number of Liberals from all parts of the country, the speeches made by the Liberal leader and his lieutenants, the programme laid down, have all tended to give to the meetings a large measure of importance. The sight of Mr. Gladstone—within three or four weeks of his 80th birthday—speaking three days running with all the fire and vigour of youth, is one at which both friends and foes cannot help expressing their wonder, and except, perhaps, that of his

bitterest adversaries, their admiration. Nor is the evident personal affection which Mr. Gladstone seems to have evoked the least striking feature of the whole business. There is no such feeling with the other leaders, whether in the Conservative or Liberal Unionist ranks. With regard to the programme set forth, it evidently errs on the side of largeness. Home Rule for Ireland, Disestablishment of the Scotch and Welsh Church, Shorter Parliaments, Registration Reform, a Free Breakfast Table, Increased powers to Londoners to govern themselves, Local Option, One Man One Vote, are each of them questions which will probably take more than one session, more than one Parliament, to settle, and these by no means exhaust the list of subjects upon which legislative action is demanded. One thing may be safely said—the Liberal party have no idea of a "Rest and be thankful" policy. It is a significant fact that Disestablishment has far warmer support in the Provinces than it has in London, while on the other hand London has wants and aspirations of its own with which at present the Provinces have not much sympathy.

ON the lines laid down by Mr. Balfour in a speech made by him at Glasgow last Monday it does not seem probable that the Government will touch the thorny question of Roman Catholic Education in Ireland just at present. The three conditions which he considered as absolutely necessary to be fulfilled before anything effective could be done in this direction were:—(1) That the advantage proposed should be cordially accepted by Roman Catholics as a solution of their difficulties; (2) that the proposal should not be used by any party in Ireland as a means to inflict a political blow upon their adversaries; and (3) that Englishmen, and Scotchmen, and Irishmen should all concur in desiring that this particular boon should be granted to the Roman Catholic population of Ireland. He avowed his object to be to afford the Irish Roman Catholics some of that education which the people in Scotland enjoyed in so full a measure. He desired to see them taught philosophy, philology, history, science, and medicine. He believed that we cannot with public advantage found a Roman Catholic University, because it would be fatal to the cause of higher education in Ireland if Catholics and Protestants were not brought into competition in obtaining the degrees and honours of University training. He objected also to any State endowment for theological teaching and in any such college as he would wish to see established there must be a conscience clause. Subject to these conditions, his opinion was that we ought to give the Roman Catholics a thoroughly well-equipped college for all modern purposes of higher education, in which they should learn Latin, Greek, mathematics, science, medicine, and law. Mr. Balfour has dropped his original idea. He has found that it was more likely to shatter his own party than to create a division in the ranks of that opposed to him. A great deal will have to happen before the Irish Bishops get the university after their own heart.

A CONTRIBUTOR to the *Sunday Chronicle*, a journal well-known in the Manchester district, has been stirring up religious people by some stinging comments on the absurdities of an antiquated theology and of lip-religion in general. He writes under the mysterious name of "Nunquam," and carries the emphasis of his title so far into his paragraphs that parsons and working men, and literary censors of various kinds, have entered protests more or less vigorously worded against his denunciations of the churches and the clergy. On Sunday he took up the task of replying to his critics, and while he exposed the presumptiveness of much that is believed, directed attention to some of the horrible social conditions in the city where these parsons and critics live. In brief, he wants them to deliver their brethren from evil in this life rather than to argue with them about evils in the life to come. Agnosticism that takes this practical turn will never hurt true religion, only "Nunquam" probably knows it is ten times easier to point to what is wrong than to set it right, whether one be a parson or a pressman.

WE find that in our account last week of the National Conference at Philadelphia we were in error in stating that Unitarians alone took part in the proceedings. One of the most remarkable Papers read there was by Mr. Francis Ellingwood Abbot, Ph.D., who does not call himself a Unitarian, and is by many Unitarians in the States regarded as an "outsider." Dr. Abbot's Paper was entitled "Scientific Theology, the Ground of all Liberal Religion," and in it he combated the position alike of the Ethical Culturists and the Agnostics. It is printed in full in the *Christian Register*, and we hope to find room for it in the *Inquirer* next week. The presence of both Dr. Furness and Dr. Abbot at the Conference is noteworthy. It was the first appearance of the former in connection with the Conference, and even now he takes no part in its proceedings, his objection being to "find himself working in any mere Denominational Convention." In 1866, when the Conference met at Syracuse, Mr. Abbot sought to amend the constitution by providing for the recognition of the Radical wing (then commonly called Parkerites), and their relief from seeming to endorse views about Jesus which it was well known they did not hold. He was, however, unsuccessful, and shortly afterwards he, and some others who sympathised with him, left the Unitarian ministry. It should be added that such men as Dr. Bartol, Dr. Dewey, and Dr. Furness considered that the views of the minority had not been properly considered. Things have, however, changed since 1866, and now the mover of the rejected amendment appears on the platform of the Conference at the invitation of its council, not, however, without a protest. One venerable minister is reported to have declared it to be an insult to the body that Dr. Abbot should have been invited, and that he should decline his credentials to a Unitarian Conference which placed Dr. Abbot on its list of speakers. Dr. Abbot was a prime mover in the establishment of the Free Religious Association, and is regarded as a man of advanced thought.

A YOUNG MINISTER writes:—"I am glad the *Inquirer* takes a hopeful view of our position as a Church. Just now there are increasing opportunities for advancing in public favour. I use this phrase advisedly, for we must appeal to the public more than we have done. We must let them know somehow or other that we want them. When we get them we must interest them. Our services must be brighter and more lively than hitherto. Unitarian ministers must realise the fact that militant doctrinal discourses merely will not feed hungry souls, or cultivate a practical love in human hearts. The average man or woman wants to be stirred, lifted out of the humdrum drudgery and cure of the work-a-day world, made to realise all that life means, and galvanised by the preacher's own enthusiasm and deep human sympathy into ambitious effort to attain to an actively honourable manhood, and to discharge punctiliously and cheerfully the small, commonplace duties of that sphere, however humble it may be, in which his lot is cast. On the whole, perhaps, we are rather poor preachers; but in most cases we are what our congregations make us. Many of our respectable Church members object to being roused by popular discourses. They object to helping the minister to welcome the element of poverty from the highways and byways, and seldom say a friendly word of welcome to a stranger who sits perchance in their pew. While we remain exclusive and cold, we shall not attract, regardless of our vaunted intellectual truth. People are hungering and thirsting for a gospel of love, not simply preached from the pulpit, but practically illustrated in the pews; and where you find a Unitarian Church worked on these lines it is prosperous, in the best sense of that word; it has its fair share of the people, it is a centre of far-reaching influences, a real religious home, and a 'way of light to Heaven.'"

OUR readers will be interested to know that the Oxford movement has made very fair progress. Services have been held every Sunday morning during the term, conducted by the Principal and professors of M.N.C. in turn, the students occasionally assisting in reading the lessons. The average attendance has been from fifty to sixty, including a few townspeople, in addition to students and others connected with the University. The Rev. Stopford Brooke's collection of hymns is in use, and the singing is congregational; indeed, there seems to be an atmosphere of brightness, comfort, and devotion about the whole place. We were among the doubters and opponents of the removal, but now that the College is at Oxford it is the bounden duty of us all to unite and make it a success. The professors and students are beginning to feel at home. An excellent site, lying between Christ Church and Mansfield, has been secured; and it is expected that building operations will begin next March. It would be a thousand pities to erect a poor, insignificant pile of buildings, and so we trust that those who can will place ample means at the disposal of the Committee. Perhaps the Principal might undertake to insert the names of all such generous benefactors in a "bidding" prayer, similar

to that which one hears at the University Church every Sunday morning! As there has been some discussion as to whether M.N.C. is a "Unitarian" College, it is amusing to hear that it is not the only college in Oxford thought to have a leaning that way. It is usual for the Balliol College Musical Society to give a concert every Sunday evening, and one feature of the programme is the singing of a chorale at the end, in which the whole audience join. The concluding verse of the chorale last Sunday evening spoke of praising God the Father, "the Son, and Him who reigns with them in highest heaven;" and a gentleman (not a Unitarian) was heard to remark to his neighbour, "That is a very Trinitarian verse for Balliol."

SPECIAL ARTICLES.

—o—

MR. ISRAEL MARK WADE.

ON the N.E. side of "Her Majesty's river of Wensum," as it languidly flows through the old city of Norwich, there is a large tract of pleasant undulating heath land called Mousehold, rising above the river to the height of 100 feet or so; and on some rising ground at the foot of this heath, in the hamlet of Thorpe, the subject of this notice was born on the 7th November, 1820.

His father, from whom he inherits his upright and soldierly bearing, was a silk and worsted weaver (a flourishing trade in Norwich at that time). Both parents were rather strict Puritans, and being fond of scripture names, they selected one from the Old and one from the New Testament, wherewith to endow their firstborn son, who in due time might be seen with "shining morning face" tripping *willingly* over the bishop's ancient bridge and through the Cathedral close to the Presbyterian Endowed School, connected with the Octagon Chapel, where, under the careful training of Mr. Trivet Allcock, he received what was then considered a good education. Here Mark Wade, as he was always called, soon became a favourite with master and boys.

When he was fifteen years of age he was apprenticed to a Norwich solicitor, and serving his time (seven years) was entitled to the freedom of the city—a privilege he enjoys to this day. From his fifteenth to his twenty-fifth year he was one of the most energetic and painstaking teachers in the Octagon Sunday-school, during which time he came very largely under the beneficent influence of Mr. and Mrs. Withers Dowson, and what is meant by that is only known to those who shared it, while the fascinating refinement of their home can scarcely be described, save in Wordsworth's words:—

"Their mortal lineaments seemed all refined
By favouring Nature and a saintly mind,
To something purer and more exquisite
Than flesh and blood."

In the year 1845 Mr. Wade came to London as clerk to Mr. Henry Enfield, secretary to the Visitors in Lunacy, and he now holds the position of Chief Clerk to the Lord Chancellor's Board of Visitors. He soon found his way to the Chapel-street branch of the London Domestic Mission, in Cripplegate, and became a power of usefulness there in hand-in-hand companionship of Mr. Edward Wright and Mr. Dobson, under the ministry of the Rev. William Vidler. He also contrived to give much help to the Rev. Mr. Philips and his successor, Mr. C. L. Corkran (his old Norwich friend), at the sister station in Spitalfields—his ardent desire being to bring the two branches of the Mission into closer union and more perfect co-operation as to plan and method of working.

The facilities for work were comparatively small in those early days of the Mission, which was established at the instance of Dr. Tuckerman soon after his visit to England; yet many improvements were effected by the joint efforts of Mr. Corkran and Mr. Wade, under the inspiration of Travers Madge and the practical suggestions of Mr. Dowson. Classes of boys and girls and young men and women were formed for elementary education, and a reading room and lending library owed their success largely to Mr. Wade's prudent care and cautious wisdom in proceeding; and when Mr. Henry Enfield—to whose strong interest in the work the supporters of the Mission were immensely indebted—became its honorary secretary, Mr. Wade, as assistant secretary, was enabled to keep him well posted in all that was going on; for every evening from six to ten found him at the post of duty. The development of the religious side of human nature has ever been a leading object with him, and after morning school at the Mission on Sundays he found his way to Dr. Hutton, in the old chapel in Little Carter lane, a man

"Whose sympathy was boundless as the sea,
His love as deep."

Here he found the spiritual refreshment he needed, returned to afternoon school in Cripplegate, and generally attended the service there in the evening.

When the Volunteer movement sprang into existence, some thirty years

ago, many of the young men of the reading room and evening classes evinced a strong desire to join it, and Mr. Wade secured the services of an old Waterloo sergeant, who, when the classes were over in the evenings, used to put them through their facings, order of march, &c., until ultimately—Mr. Wade at their head—as many as forty of them presented themselves at Islington, and were enrolled in the 4th Regiment of Volunteers, then under command of Lord Truro, who hailed with delight such an addition of well-drilled men, and soon made a commissioned officer of their leader, and he rose by successive steps to the rank of Major of the 17th North Middlesex Regiment, having been presented, while captain, at Court, by Lord Enfield; and, had opportunity been given, doubtless the Prince of Wales, to whom he was presented, would have been enlisted into the ranks of that other army in which Mr. Wade has so long been an active officer, and in which his brightest laurels have been won, and his greatest victories achieved. He remained in the Volunteer Service for upwards of twenty years, when he retired, not as “The tired soldier, bold and brave,” but because something must be relinquished as time wore on, and the other service could not be thought of, seeing that it still required all the energy at his command.

Mr. Wade has held the office of Secretary of the Sunday School Association ever since the retirement of Mr. Vidler, and latterly, in conjunction with the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, whose valuable aid no one appreciated more than does his colleague. The interesting and exhaustive reports from the pen of Mr. Wade during the many years of his secretaryship, and the well arranged tabulated returns of Sunday-schools throughout the country, testify more eloquently than words to the unflagging industry that is always at the service of the Association.

On becoming secretary he was introduced by his old friend Travers Madge to the Manchester District Society, and has only once or twice failed to be present at their annual Good Friday gatherings, where he has always been heartily welcomed as representing the London Association.

A few years ago the friends of education in our churches throughout the country thought Mr. Wade's removal to his new house at Highgate a convenient time for the recognition of his eminent services, and with great unanimity they presented him with an excellent library of books, including many standard works of master minds in the walks of literature, together with library furniture, &c.—a testimonial well-deserved and highly-prized.

Mr. Wade was at one time the superintendent of the Portland-street Sunday-school, and, with the late Mr. Henry Preston, helped in the formation of a District Sunday School Association for London. The number of schools at that time being seven, are now increased to more than three times seven; and after being secretary for some years he now fills the post of President. He is also Chairman of the Managers of the Holloway group of elementary schools, under the School Board of London, one of the trustees of Manchester New College, Oxford, and a member of the Committees of the British and Foreign and London District Unitarian Associations.

He was married on Aug. 31, 1864, to Miss M. P. Porter, of Long Sutton, whose happiness it has been to sympathise in his life's work, and to make for him the restful home his unresting spirit needs; for of him, in Milton's words, it may still be said,—

“Zeal and duty are not slow,
But on occasion's forelock watchful wait.”

MCQUAKER LECTURES IN THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND—I.

BY THE REV. A. WEBSTER, ABERDEEN.

HAVING just got through my first course of lecturing in connection with the McQuaker Trust I think it may interest your readers to know how I fared. I arranged that my first lecture should be given at Buckie, a fishing town of about 6,000 inhabitants, about sixty-five miles from Aberdeen. I secured the lesser Public Hall, and issued posters and leaflets, setting forth that I would deliver a public lecture on Nov. 13, my subject being, “The New Bible and the Old Doctrines.” Two days before the date of my lecture I was annoyed by the receipt of a letter from the hall-keeper, informing me that I could not be allowed to speak in the hall; for, by the rules of the building, and the will of some of the committee, no one with such views as I held could be permitted within the hall. This was a bad omen, and it seemed as if the testator's ghost had appeared to the fishermen. I wrote a stiff letter, claiming the use of the hall according to bargain, and declaring that I would hold the keeper responsible for all the expenses I had incurred. This evidently brought the committee to reason, for I received a letter by the next post saying the hall would be at my order, and asking me not to make any reference in my address to the previous refusal. I did not, however,

feel quite secure with the hall, and feared a scene. I left home not being sure of my head, but hoping that I would return, still to wear the hat with McQuaker's name inside, and with which he fitted me himself, careful man that he was.

I had made the acquaintance through the Postal Mission of a man at Tochineal, and as he wished me to baptize his child, I broke my journey at that place, and at a pleasant meeting of his relatives (all orthodox) I went through my service of dedication.

I may say that I found there an unusual prejudice in favour of Unitarianism. Two years ago the shooting lodge of Tochineal was occupied by a well-known Unitarian M.P., whose wife devoted herself in the most gentle manner to the service of the sick and needy. “There never was such a fine family here before,” the people said. “Nor knowest thou what argument thy life to thy neighbour's creed hath lent.” After tea my friend and I proceeded by train to Buckie. I saw the hall-keeper, found him reconciled to my occupancy, and pleased to get his rent. He told me I would have a big meeting; but I was more afraid than hopeful, having heard some curious stories about the bigotry of the fishers.

As the hour came near the people flocked in such crowds that the large hall (holding 1,300) had to be lit, and when I ascended the platform the under portion was filled with men and women having an eager look on their faces. I threw myself on their spiritual hospitality at once, and had not proceeded far ere I found that I would have an attentive, and, to a considerable extent, appreciative hearing. Applause was frequent, and I kept wondering how such sympathy was to be found in Buckie. I spoke for an hour, and then put myself in the hands of my hearers. Immediately a questioner rose, and when he was done another, and yet another, and for an hour and a-quarter I was heckled as I never was before, the whole being good humouredly though earnestly done. At the close, one of my questioners in a very kindly way proposed a vote of thanks to me, and expressed a wish for my return. The entire meeting agreed with the proposal, and I closed the meeting with a benediction. There was a large demand for literature at the end. The local paper gave a very fair report of the meeting.

There being no train back to Tochineal, my friend and I set out to convey another friend who had walked from Fochabers to the lecture. At the cross roads we took our way through the Cullen Woods, and reached “Tochineal Cottage” about one o'clock in the morning, after a moonlight walk of nearly seven miles. We were tired, but elated at the success of the first of the McQuaker lectures.

JOTTINGS AT PHILADELPHIA.

THE National Conference just held was very largely attended by outsiders, and its three days were crowded with meetings. The Papers were of very high ability, but as the *Christian Register* reports them in full I will only jot down a few notes of interesting features of the gathering.

The opening sermon by Dr. Furness, preached in the Unitarian Church, made a deep impression, not only for the spiritual quality of its thought, but also for the personality behind it. As most of the readers of the *Inquirer* know, Dr. Furness is one of our oldest, if not the very oldest, of our ministers. The Rev. Dr. Bartol, of Boston, who has just resigned, and Dr. Hedge are almost the only ones who can claim to be his contemporaries. These latter entered the ministry several years later. Dr. Furness was ordained in 1825. For more than fifty years he has preached with rare ability, great fidelity, and with a mind enriched with the best culture and widest scholarship. His ministry has been marked for its high moral and spiritual ideal. His life and work have been wrought into the history of the Unitarian Church in Philadelphia, where he has held a pastorate of half a century. To the world at large he is known as the author of “Jesus and His Biographers,” and kindred works. At the age of eighty-seven, with so rich and pure a life behind him, and still with the vigour of one in his prime, he rose before the packed crowd which had come to hear him. In the brief pause before he announced his text there was a hushed silence through the church such as only comes when the hearers have an intense interest and eager anticipation. He spoke with the hope, faith, and inspiration of a prophet. The scene, with its associations, memories, and suggestions, was deeply impressive and uplifting. The programme of meetings was comprehensive, and the different subjects followed each other in fitting order. They dealt with high-thinking and practical action, and were affirmative and definite. They indicated the real present condition of the Unitarian Church. First in relation to the thought side. The two addresses which stand out as the most prominent were those of the Rev. S. R. Calthrop and Dr. F. E. Abbot. The topic of the former was faith in God. Mr. Calthrop combines the wide knowledge of the scientist with the fervour of the devotee. His

imagination is vivid and his religious insight clear and deep. His thought as it passes through his mind is all alive and aglow.

Dr. Abbot, on the other hand, in his mental characteristics, is in striking contrast. He is strictly logical, and his imagination and feelings are wholly subordinate to his thought. He is the religious philosopher, and as a thinker takes the very first rank in the higher realms of philosophic inquiry. To many of the readers of the *Inquirer* he is, doubtless, known as the author of a book of signal ability on Philosophical Theism, and belongs to the school who join issue with the Agnostics.

While, however, these writers discussed vital questions touching the thought side of religion, the trend of the Conference was towards practical action. From first to last it was evident that the American Unitarians were deeply impressed with the conviction that they had before them a greater work than ever before. During the forenoon of Tuesday, when the various reports were read, and also on Wednesday evening, when the needs of the American Unitarian Association were presented, it was evident that the touch of the missionary spirit had been felt. His new awakening already begins to bear fruit. Before the war, Mr. Reynolds told us, there were only 250 societies; now there are hardly less than 450, the increase being principally during the past ten or fifteen years. The number of tracts then distributed was 15,000; it is now twenty times that number. The annual contributions then were \$15,000; this year the amount has been over \$60,000. Twenty-five years ago there was but one church on the Pacific Coast, now there are eighteen, and during this period sixty-three new churches have been organised in New England. The other reports were in the same tone. Dr. Eliot, of Portland, Oregon, gave a sketch of a new training school for ministers to be established near the University of California. Brooke Herford made an impressive statement of how the call had come from Japan, and even Central India. With reference to the latter he referred to a letter he had received from a native who, by the study of the Bible, had become a Unitarian, and his eagerness to know more of our faith joined to his appeal for books was pathetic. In view of all this, and much more could be added in the same line, Mr. Reynolds, with direct earnestness, told his hearers that the American Unitarian Association, in view of the enlarged missionary work during the coming year, would call for at least \$200,000.

Besides this enlarged missionary spirit the afternoon meetings were given to the subjects of temperance, the formation of Unity Clubs and Guilds for the young, and the reports and addresses of the Woman's Auxiliary. These evidenced the increased religious activity in our churches. More than usual interest clustered around the meetings of the Woman's Auxiliary, because it was proposed to make this a national organisation distinct from the American Unitarian Association. This body has grown to be one of our most efficient missionary bodies. It has already enlisted a widespread religious activity, but it is only in its early stage. As time goes on, and the spirit of consecration to the work increases, the Woman's Auxiliary will become one of the most important aids towards building up the Kingdom of God in the world.

The interest of the Conference culminated in the last meeting in the Academy of Music on Thursday evening, over which the Hon. George W. Curtis presided. The numbers present have been estimated as from three to four thousand. The Rev. Minot J. Savage, Dr. E. E. Hale, and Mr. Curtis were the speakers, and the three were at their best. Mr. Savage, with that clearness and force of statement for which he is marked, gave an outline of the religious changes, and showed how, in the revolution of our ideas of the Universe, there must come a reconstruction of faith as based on the ideas of Liberal Christianity. Mr. Hale emphasised the fact that the Unitarian Church was eminently fitted to build up the Kingdom of God, because it was not burdened by a fixed creed or ritual, and could therefore act directly as the Spirit of God dictated; and Mr. Curtis made an eloquent plea for the liberal faith as resting on goodness, and making the spirit of Christ the great inspirer of human activity. The audience listened to these speakers with rapt attention. Since Wendell Phillips passed from the platform we have no orator of more polished and graceful eloquence than Mr. Curtis. As those thousands of eyes were fixed on him, and brightened by his noble utterances, the effect was uplifting. The tone of the meeting from beginning to the end was of a character to make an impression not only upon Unitarians, but also upon those who had come in to hear an exposition of our principles and truths. It was a fitting conclusion, and the members of the Conference left the Academy of Music with the prevailing tone of hopefulness. The conviction has dawned upon the delegates that the Unitarian Church of America has a future, with the promise of still larger results, and that to reach these demands a deeper and more sacred consecration.

S. W. B.

UNITARIANS AND THEISTS.

THE following are among the further letters we have received on the subject raised by the Rev. Chas. Voysey in his letter in our issue of the 23rd ult. :—

SIR,—So far as I am concerned, I intend to limit this discussion to absolutely necessary explanations; and I hope they will be very few. You say, in your note, "When Mr. Hopps, who looks upon Christ as a man, says that he can bring us into fellowship with God, he is giving to a dead man a power which could only be ascribed to a god." I do not know what "a god" is, but I do know that I am not where you think I am. I believe in the actual, literal, daily activity of so-called "dead men" in our sphere. You seem to blame me for "using phraseology about Christ in which the notion may be involved that he is actually in person amongst men." But I do believe he is "actually in person amongst men." I do not believe in dead men, and a dead Jesus; I believe in living men, and a living Jesus; and I have no reason for thinking that they or he have entirely lost their old longing and loving, and turned their attention to other interests, and other worlds than ours.

I cannot reply to my dear friend Wicksteed, simply because I do not think we should clear up these matters by discussing them. They are too subtle for that. It is still true that the letter killeth, while the spirit giveth life. But I hardly need say that I never for a moment imagined that anyone would think I spoke for other people when I posted up Dr. Marcus Dods's ledger, and showed him how the balance stood.

J. PAGE HOPPS.

SIR,—Mr. Hopps says, "I believe that Jesus was a perfect revelation of God, just as I believe that a superb sunrise or a lovely primrose is a perfect revelation of God." Your readers may like to see what Dr. Martineau said on this point half a century ago in his lecture entitled "The proposition 'that Christ is God' proved to be false from the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures." It was one of a course entitled "Unitarianism Defended," in the Liverpool Controversy of 1839. After saying that were Christ "simply an example to us. . . . he might indeed constitute the centre of our morality; but he would not properly belong to our religion," he continues :—

"It is then as the type of God, the human image of the everlasting Mind, that Christ becomes an object of our Faith. Once did a dark and doubting world say, like Philip on the evening of Gethsemane, 'show us the Father and it sufficeth us'; but now hath Christ 'been so long with us' that we, 'who have seen him, have seen the Father.' This I conceive to have been the peculiar office of Jesus: to show us, not to tell us, the spirit of that Being who spreads round us in Infinitude, and leads us through Eternity. The universe had prepared before us the scale of Deity. Christ has filled it with his own spirit, and we worship now, not the cold intellectual deity of natural religion; not the distant majesty, the bleak immensity, the mechanical omnipotence, the immutable stillness of the speculative Theistic God, but One far nearer to our worn and wearied hearts; One whose likeness is seen in Jesus of Nazareth, and whose portraiture, suffused with the tints of that soul, is impressed upon creation. . . . In order to fulfil this office of revealing, in his own person, the character of the Father, Christ possessed and manifested all the moral attributes of Deity. . . . God can have no other, and no more, perfection of character intelligible to us. These moral attributes of God we conceive to have been compressed in Christ within the physical and intellectual limits of humanity, to have been unfolded and displayed amid the infirmities of a suffering and tempted nature; and during the brevity of a mortal life swiftly hurried to its close. . . . To this view, however, of the person of Christ, Trinitarians object as defective, and proceed to add one other ingredient to the conception, viz., that he possessed the physical and intellectual attributes of Deity—that he is to be esteemed no less eternal, omnipotent, and omnipresent than the Infinite Father," &c. (pp. 5, 6). My father, who maintained his faith as "the doctrine of the Gospel," wrote on his copy of this lecture :—"In this lecture are passages of exquisite beauty, and—if connected with the chosen authority of Christ—as true as beautiful." I am not acquainted with Dr. Martineau's present views, but what I have quoted need not be affected by modern criticism as to the composition of the Gospels; since anything that derogated from Christ's moral perfection might be attributed to a defect in the record! I quote the passage to show what might be said by one who maintained an "uncompromising monotheism."

One of your correspondents is grieved that "various Unitarian Churches cling tenaciously to the phrases and formulæ of Orthodoxy. All that I am acquainted with reject these 'formulæ.' If he means certain scriptural expressions in which he does not accord, let me remind him that those opponents of Orthodoxy who founded our Unitarian associations based their Christian belief on the Christian

Scriptures, and many sincere Unitarians have not departed from that practice.

There is now a far greater variety of opinion among those who bear the Unitarian name than there was some years ago. In some respects it is well that it should be so. If Roman Catholics and English Protestants may be alike "Trinitarian," why should we try to narrow "Unitarian?"

R. L. CARPENTER.

SIR,—Yet another logomachy over the name and influence of the man who showed us

"The Creed of Creeds,

In loveliness of perfect deeds,

More strong than all poetic thought."

As regularly as the "big gooseberry season" recurs in the daily Press so regularly are the changes rung on the old, old theme. Your files, and those of your contemporaries, reflect not much real novelty of view, but rather temperamental contrasts. Human nature is complex, and its religious manifestations vary from heights of mystical fervour (like those in the poem just quoted) down to bald "rationalism" like Mr. Lockett's.

"Why has not man a microscopic eye?

For this plain reason, man is not a fly."

Religion is not often a matter of much concern to the unimaginative mind—happily the exception. The "abyssmal deeps of personality" are not fathomed by elementary logic and mathematics. Doubtless there are "two Unitarianisms," as there were two Hebraisms; the "spirit" and the "letter" have always commanded their disciples. There is no inflexible standard of faith; surely we have "seen an end" of verbal perfection. "Theism," as Mr. Voysey preaches it, and "Theism," as Mr. Hopps preaches it, are very different, for the men are different, and they reach a different class of minds. A touch of dogmatism has helped them to speak with authority to kindred natures.

I see Mr. Wicksteed's point, and partly sympathise with him; but think he overestimates the importance of the substitution of "Jesus of Nazareth" for "Christ"; since, if the latter is now used symbolically, rather than literally, the former is on its way to be so used, likewise.

The lines of cleavage are less simple by far than your correspondent, Mr. Lockett, fancies. It is flattering to Mr. Hopps to be classed with W. E. Channing as a representative of "the old-fashioned or evangelical Unitarianism," doubtless, and his modest blushes need not mar so ingenious a tribute to his worth as a Christian teacher. I fear that we of the "newer" Unitarianism are hardly ready to be affiliated with Mr. Voysey's "rational" Theism. These are confusing times; new combinations abound; but the "falsehood of extremes" is still repugnant to some of us. Speaking for myself, I am not willing to be "fused" along with any movement which breaks with the rich, historic past. "Was Christ a man like us? Ah, let us try if we then, too, can be such men as he!" I fancy Hazlitt's sentiments (quoted in your review of the "Selections" last week) will long be shared by crowds of devout souls to whom he has been a mirror of the divinely-human. I have long thought Robert Hall a libeller of Unitarianism, when he said that "its whole secret was in thinking meanly of Christ." And the mention of Hazlitt recalls that discussion of his gifted circle, concerning "Great Men one would have liked to have met," when Lamb struck in at the end, "If Shakespeare were to enter the room we should all rise to meet him; but if that person were to come in, we should try to kiss the hem of his garment."

When "idolatry" of that sort dies utterly out it will not matter much how you label the *caput mortuum* of mechanical belief and observance which survives.

HENRY WOODS PERRIS.

P.S.—Mr. Hopps's fault, in welcoming Dr. Marcus Dods too eagerly as an ally of the liberal faith, leans to virtue's side—hard, unsympathetic criticism throws fresh obstacles in the way of the seeker after a new spiritual synthesis. By all means take the beam out of the Unitarian eyes; there are survivals enough, but only abounding life can create nobler forms and symbols. Vision and faithfulness make all things new.

SIR,—If you are so kind as to give me any space for reply to your correspondents on this subject I will do my best to set the example of writing short letters. I thank those gentlemen one and all for their kindness in speaking of me, and I welcome most gratefully the sympathy with Theism manifested by Mr. Wicksteed, "E. C.," and Mr. W. G. Lockett.

I am glad also to be corrected where I have erred. Of course, I knew without being told that the Unitarian name stands for a great diversity of opinions, beliefs, and sentiments, and that even if Mr. Hopps had been writing as a representative of the whole body of Unitarians he would have no right to do so. But the question was

not of the truth of this or that particular belief or sentiment about Christ or any other theological subject. The question Mr. Hopps raised was, *what is the Unitarian belief or sentiment* on such and such points? He, a professed Unitarian, was giving to us outsiders direct and explicit information as to what Unitarian belief is, and in what it consists. If your readers will attend to this point carefully they will see that I cannot be at all blamed for accepting for Mr. Hopps the position which he himself chose to assume. They must, in short, blame him and not me for assuming that he had any right to speak on behalf of the body of Unitarians. If, however, one or another Unitarian minister or layman came forward repudiating Mr. Hopps's claim and his definitions of Unitarianism, it shows the disadvantage, however great the advantages may be, of not having a standard of belief of some kind to appeal to. The name Unitarian becomes *nondescript*. Its chief and only value seems to be recognised in its having no definite meaning at all.

"E. C." thinks my isolation a mistake, and wonders why we do not join the Unitarians. I give him this reason:—We have a very strong and definite belief on the one hand which we feel it to be our most sacred duty to maintain and promulgate. On the other hand, we see we cannot fulfil this duty without strenuous and persistent attacks on the prevailing belief and sentiment about Christ. We are a Church militant, and must of necessity be "isolated" from all who are opposed to us, or whom we see to be more in alliance with our enemies than with ourselves. In our eyes the cause is worth any sacrifice, and we accept the consequences of our hostility to fashionable beliefs and sentiments without hesitation, and we hope, also, without any ill-will towards those whose errors we combat.

"E. C." joins issue with us in his letter. He says, "Apart from the temporal incidents of Jesus's teaching it appears to me he taught the purest and highest mission." This is exactly what we deny—on the authority of the Gospels—not because Jesus did not ever say what was "the purest and highest mission," but because he, in the greater part of his teaching, contradicted and counteracted those few Theistic utterances by horrible pictures of God and his dealings, on which some of the worst dogmas of orthodoxy are honestly founded. Neither is it true, but false, that Christ was the first who taught in its fulness the doctrine of the "Fatherhood of God." Only years of blind following of the multitude can make it possible to repeat that falsehood. And if Jesus did teach the Fatherhood of God no one ever said more to neutralise and deface it. "The Theist must be careful" before all things to speak the truth, and not to lie for Christ or for anyone else. This may account for our isolation, which we did not seek, but which is a small price to pay for honour.

To my dear friend Mr. Hopps I can only say I *do* think that he uses words in a very illegitimate way. He must bear all the consequences of the course which he adopts, thinking it to be right. I do not judge him. I can only say I could not tread in his steps for a single hour.

CHARLES VOYSEY.

SIR,—If the correspondence evoked by Mr. Voysey's letter accomplishes nothing more it will at least serve to show that it is just as unwise for Mr. J. P. Hopps to use words and phrases "with a difference" as for Dr. Marcus Dods.

Of course, Mr. Hopps has a perfect right to "accept Christ as a perfect revelation of God," and to make him his "moral supreme" if he chooses to do so; but he owes it to his hearers and readers to make plain his meaning in language which does not need to be afterwards explained. The point on which Mr. Voysey and theists in general needed information was whether—seeing no objection was taken to those phrases—they were to consider them as accepted by the Unitarian body generally. Mr. Hopps now explains that he believes Jesus to have been a "perfect revelation of God" in the same sense that he believes "a lovely primrose is a perfect revelation of God;" but then no one ever speaks of primroses being the perfection of God's revelation of Himself. What Mr. Hopps evidently means, if his simile is of any use, is that Jesus, as a man, was a perfect type of man, and however much we, as theists, may dispute the assertion, we at least understand what he means directly he drops ambiguity.

Mr. Wicksteed points out that no man *can* speak "officially as the representative of the Unitarian body," and yet Mr. Hopps, after quoting words from Dr. Dods's sermon, exclaims, "This is, in the very essence of it, Unitarian." Clearly, then, Mr. Voysey's letter was needed, and, equally clearly, Mr. Hopps must in future qualify his statements regarding what is or is not "essentially Unitarian."

"E. C." asks: "In all friendliness, why should Mr. Voysey seek to belittle the influence of Jesus?" This is a curious question, seeing that a large part of Mr. Voysey's teaching is designed to keep before the minds of his hearers just what that influence is, and is doing Mr. Voysey seeks to show that the worship of Jesus—whether openly by Orthodox Christians, or veiled by Christian Agnostics—and the

using of misleading expressions concerning him by Unitarians, tend to the alienating of the hearts of men from the One Living and True God, and he *never* has to explain the meaning of the words he sees in his writing or preaching. "E. C." thinks, "his action is a mistake in principle and in tactics." In tactics it may be, if his object were to secure popularity, but in principle, I hope and believe, every Unitarian is at one with him. The latter part of "E. C.'s" letter is tempting, but I have no desire to introduce theological controversy into your columns.

One paragraph in the letter of "W. G. Lockett" is, I think, worthy of reproduction. That gentleman says: "Those who make use of them (the phrases and formulæ of Orthodoxy) may be honest enough, but I must confess that they seem to me to be unworthy compromises with fashionable Churchism and little better than cant." This is strong language, representing thoughts which remain unexpressed oftener than they find their way into print, and it explains and justifies that action on the part of Mr. Voysey which "E. C." thinks is a "mistake in principle and in tactics."

Just a word, Sir, *re* your own editorial comment. You say that "Where Christ is concerned Mr. Voysey does not always stoop to argument; he gives the result of his own thought or study, and adds, 'That is a fact!' in a way that shows dogmatism is not dead yet." But, Sir, are not there certain self-evident truths on which dogmatism is unavoidable? We all believe that God is Perfect in Power, Wisdom and Goodness, the Righteous Loving Father of all mankind. Then, if the Gospels relate words and acts which show that Jesus could not have been perfect in either of these attributes, it seems to me it is necessary to be dogmatic and to say: "Christ was *not* the perfect revelation of God; this is a fact!" This is all that Mr. Voysey does, and no man is more ready or anxious to listen to argument, or to admit he is wrong when his error has been pointed out and proved. But until then, even his opponents must give him credit for staunch loyalty to truth, and scorn of saying one thing when he really means another.

Altogether, I cannot but believe that the correspondence appearing in your columns will do us all good, awaking us to the fact that we hold the key of the future, and that there is a higher goal before us than even being received into the Church.

J. GLEN.

81, Cambridge-road, Hammersmith, W., Dec. 3.

LITERATURE.

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(Publishers and others sending books for review are respectfully desired to state prices.)

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MARY HOWITT'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.—I.*

A CHARMING little book might have been constructed out of this voluminous autobiography, which, in about one-fourth of the space occupied by these two bulky volumes, would have contained all that the world really cares to know about William and Mary Howitt. For in truth these graceful writers, if "indissolubly wedded in English literature," belong already to a past age. They never took rank among the *Dii Majores*; and while William Howitt was little more than an industrious compiler and book-maker, animated with an ardent love of nature and a generous enthusiasm for political and religious liberty, Mary Howitt can hardly take rank with Harriett Martineau, Mrs. Gaskell, or that charming American writer, Louisa Alcott. Her poetry is already almost quite forgotten, and she will chiefly live in her little books for children, in some of which she tells very gracefully the story of her own childhood. But Mary Howitt was a gentle, lovable, motherly woman, who always inspired warm interest and friendship. She lived to a great age; was intimately acquainted with many of the literary and artistic notabilities of her time; and her reminiscences of early life take us back into a primitive world, and give us curious glimpses into the past condition of society in the wilds of her native Staffordshire, and among the Society of Friends, with whom she had an hereditary connection. Both the Howitts belonged to Quaker families, and were brought up in close communion with that strictest of all sects; but it is interesting to note the gradual process of development, their divergence from all the orthodox standards into religious Liberalism, followed by a reaction which led, in Mary Howitt's case, when far advanced in life, to a reception into the bosom of the infallible Church.

It must be acknowledged that in both volumes several interesting incidents and descriptions are overlaid with a mass of somewhat trivial details which concern no one but the immediate family circle. The limits of our space prevent us from giving even an outline of Mary Howitt's history, and we shall do better service to our

readers by extracting a few passages bearing upon her religious development and some interesting references to well-known literary persons.

In recording the recollections of her childhood Mary Howitt remarks that her Quaker father and mother neither gave nor permitted their children to receive religious instruction, adhering to the fundamental principles of George Fox, that Christ, the true inward life, sends to each individual interior inspirations as their guide of Christian faith, and that his Spirit, being free, does not submit to human learning and customs.

"It was the earnest desire of our father that our attention should be directed to Christ as the one great, all-sufficient sacrifice; yet, nevertheless, so entirely was the fundamental doctrine of the Saviour being the Incarnate God hidden from us, that we grew up to the age when opinions assert themselves, to find that our minds had instinctively shaped themselves into the Unitarian belief, out of which we have both been brought by different means. As regards my sister Anna, she has said that she found in reading 'Ecce Homo' the exact counterpart of her own youthful views of Jesus, which had grown up in the unassisted soil of her mind. A singular exhibition this of the natural untrained growth of a young ingenious [ingenuous] intellect, hedged round within the narrowest pale of religious observances, from which all outward expression was excluded, in the belief, and in the silent prayerful hope that the Divine Spirit would lead it into all truth."

Here we have one more convincing proof that if the unperturbed heart of childhood is left free from the influence of dogmatic theology it naturally tends to the Unitarian belief. No one reading the Gospels free from the traditional bias of orthodoxy would ever believe that the babe of Bethlehem, the man of Nazareth, the sufferer on the Cross, was the Incarnate God. It was only in after life, when Mary Howitt felt the æsthetic charm of the Roman service, and with failing powers came under the influence of the priesthood, that she gradually discarded religious Liberalism and was received as a professed neophyte in the bosom of the Roman Church.

William Howitt, also, very early in life outgrew his inherited Quakerism, and startled his friends by the boldness of his heterodoxy. In the early days of his courtship, on one of those "long silent First-day evenings," which must have been almost intolerable to the younger and more imaginative "Friends," Mary writes:—

"I was shocked and startled by William suddenly bursting out with, 'Mary, what is thy opinion of the godhead of Christ?'"

"I knew not what to say. I had, in fact, never thought of it. My mother looked up with a kind of quiet astonishment. My father closed his book, and remarked with solemn gravity of tone, 'We have nothing to do with such subjects, William.'"

"Had the latter attempted to argue the point, it would have been felt a profanation—a touching of holy things with unclean hands. Religious discussion was never heard in our family, where the aim, as I have said, was to preserve the soul in passivity for the divine inward revelation which was not to be subjected to the natural reason of man."

What a contrast is this picture of the interior of a Quaker family to the abounding life and freedom of a cultured Unitarian family, freely discussing art, theology, politics, and everything that concerns the higher interests of humanity in the belief that the free action of the reason is the highest inspiration of God!

Early in their married life William and Mary Howitt settled in the Pottery District, and we have the following glimpse of Unitarians at Hanley:—

"There was at the period of our sojourn at Hanley a small body of Unitarians, who were endeavouring to introduce their opinions to the great mass of chapel goers. My husband, whose mind had a tendency to Unitarianism, was eagerly sought after by them, particularly as he was discovered to be an able disputant. He had no little pleasure in advocating their cause against the vast majority of Nonconformists, who, he thought, showed a spirit of intolerance towards them."

But disputation and mere negation of other people's opinions lead to nothing, so that it is not to be wondered at that the Unitarianism, born of controversy, has never prospered in the Potteries. Later on, in the year 1840, Mary Howitt shows the same decided inclination to religious Liberalism. In a letter to her sister she writes:—

"William quite interests me by what he hints of a certain conversation he has had with thee on the state of the Society of Friends. It is deplorable, and marks decline in every way. I wish there were a fine, right-minded, active, and liberal body of Christians that one could join fellowship with. There is something very good and very comfortable in a religious community if it were established on Christian, not on sectarian, principles—I can imagine something so holy and affectionate in true religious fellowship and brotherhood. I doubt if we must not wait for its enjoyment till we get to the Better Land. We try to make our children Christians without reference to any sect or party whatever, and except in the fundamental doctrines of old Quakerism, such as abhorrence of war and principles of universal religion and political liberty, Anna Mary is no more a Friend than the Archbishop of Canterbury. The boys will grow up the same."

* "Mary Howitt: An Autobiography." Edited by her daughter, Margaret Howitt. Two Vols. Isbister. 1889. Price 32s.

Some of our elder readers probably remember Lucretia Mott, and the lectures she gave forty-nine years ago in Essex-street Chapel, and the old Carter-lane Chapel. We have a passing glimpse of her at the end of the first volume. "I wish thou could see and hear Lucretia Mott. She is a glorious, noble-minded woman, and a plain Friend, too. The English Friends will not receive her because she is a Hicksite [a Rationistic Friend]. They also say they think women thus sent by an entire nation are out of their sphere."

Here we must pause, deferring till next week the very interesting story of Mary Howitt's connection with London Unitarians, and of her mental development till her final reception into the Roman Church. M.

ARTICLES IN THE REVIEWS.

THE *New Review* breathes anti-Gladstonianism in the article by Mrs. Linton, and indirectly in the two criticisms on Mr. Morley. Mr. Henry James begins an Italian story; Professor Max Müller starts the notion that old men should retire from public business, and let the young men have a chance; he admits brilliant exceptions are to be found, of which he is probably one. M. Pasteur concludes his article on "Rabies," and Lady Middleton continues her rummages in the Muniment Room of Wollaton Hall. The most amusing, and, in some respects, the saddest article is the Hon. Lewis Wingfield's story of his troubles anent the Lord Mayor's Show, in which other troubles are spoken of, not so lightly to be smiled away.

In the *Contemporary* Mrs. Fawcett returns to the cause of "Children in Theatres," and once more shows up the hardship and suffering imposed upon them in the interests of "the drama." We were told with much flourishing that the *schooling* of the little ones would not be neglected, for public-spirited managers would carefully attend to that. The best results, attained only after sharp inspection from the London School Board, show that while about 1,000 children are engaged in London theatres in the season school accommodation is provided for less than forty, the average attendance being smaller still. As the greater number of theatrical managers certainly cannot aspire to Drury Lane accommodation, in relation to which Mrs. Fawcett's figures are quoted, the state of things with regard to pantomime children may be imagined. Mr. Giffen again presents a cheery view of social affairs in his "Gross and Net Gain of Rising Wages." Mr. Sidney Webb argues in favour of "Limitation of the Hours of Labour." Professor Sayce sums up briefly what can be gleaned about "Ancient Arabia" in a very noticeable article; but for those who seek instruction Sir William Dawson's article on "The Deluge" may be commended. They will learn something about the author's powers of belief if nothing else. By the way, how does Sir William make the Hebrew of Gen. iv. 1, "Q'anithi ish eth-Yahveh," translatable into "I have produced a man, the Yahveh"? He seems to have emptied the meaning of the prefix to Yahveh in a most unjustifiable manner by thus using it as the sign of the accusative only. Two pleasing "Christmas" contributions are given, and Sir William W. Hunter concludes his pathetic narrative of the "Old Missionary."

The *Nineteenth Century* contains some interesting reviews of books, the reviewers being Mr. Gladstone, Mr. A. Birrell, Mr. Walter Pater, Mr. Hamilton Aidé, and Mr. Walter Frewen Lord. We commend Mr. Birrell's remarks on Pope to special notice. In these days of "formless" poetry there is a plentiful lack of acquaintance with the virtues of the first of literary formalists. The Rev. C. H. Wright presents a very serious indictment of the Imperial Government of Russia as a persecutor of Protestants, the sting of which is, however, rather disarmed by the news, recently given through the *Times*, that M. Pobedonoszeff has been assigned a period of three months in which to answer the damaging accusations made against the Orthodox Greek party in this respect. Mr. Frank H. Hill discusses the feasibility of "devolution" to Mr. Gladstone's term without "unmaking" England. A very instructive article by Sir John Lambert on "Franchises, Past and Present," and a discussion on the Imperial Federation idea by Sir Julius Vogel (former Premier of New Zealand), strike us as the most business-like contributions this month. Mr. Gladstone's forecast from the recent elections has probably been noticed already by readers of the daily papers. M. H. Dziewicki gives an article "In praise of London Fog," which is admirable reading on a clear bright frosty morning with a robin singing at the window.

DECEMBER MAGAZINES.

BY AN OLD PENMAN.

CHRISTMAS numbers and Christmas stories come upon us in a perfect snowstorm, and this sharp touch of winter weather makes them a little less unseasonable than their date. There is sufficient matter to while away a good deal of leisure in the stories that are not exactly

festive, and the essays that never will be. It must serve here to notice what is noticeable, and leave the level, good, or worse, to take care of itself. The *English Illustrated* has a specially good double number, in whose pages I at once observe the Rev. Harold Rylett's article on the poor nail-people of the Dudley district. Mr. Rylett is always sympathetic where suffering toil is concerned, and I am glad he has used his stay at Dudley to the good purpose this paper shows. The tales and pictures are a perfect mine of interest, and May Vernon shows she can write for children in her quaint story called "The Golden Dachshunds." *Longman's* is chiefly noticeable for the close of Mr. Besant's tale, in which he has added one more association to the multitude that gather round our great mddly river. Mr. Val Prinsep is to begin the new year with a "Story of the French Revolution," to be entitled "Virginie." If his pen equals his pencil it should be a dainty piece of work. Any unwary reader who takes up *Macmillan's* thinking to learn something theological from the title beginning "The Incarnation of Krishna" is bidden observe that "Mulvaney" follows that oriental name; and may prepare for light laughter rather than for deep thought. The more serious element is amply supplied, however, as usual in this magazine. *Time* ambleth, notwithstanding, or perhaps, by reason of the winter being upon us. There is an absence of heavy matter, and a prodigal supply of short and mostly amusing contributions. Perhaps the most whimsical is Miss Alice Pollard's notion of "A New Examination," viz., for street musicians, who are to be graded for the different postal districts according to composers affected.

The *Sunday-School Helper*.—The issue for this month is unique, being "A Christmas Service of Praise and Prayer." Superintendents of our Sunday-schools ought at once to procure it, and so give themselves time to digest its contents themselves, and familiarise the children with the hymns against the day when it will be used. We cannot do better than quote a few words from the introduction, which will best explain its use and purpose:—"In publishing this service, the editor has sought to give expression to the reverence which all thoughtful and earnest people, young and old alike, must feel when they call to mind the humble origin, the noble life, the saintly character, and the passionate enthusiasm for goodness of Jesus of Nazareth. Whatever critical or theological views men may hold, however widely they may differ in regard to the value they should place on miracle-stories and the like, there is practical unanimity in placing Jesus at the head of that noble band of heroes, prophets, saints and martyrs, by whose words and deeds mankind have been blessed and glorified." The service may be used by all classes of Christian Theists, and thus is it shown that all worshippers are one at heart. The music is simple, and the connective readings are short and picturesque.

Life-Lore grows upon the taste, as good things should; the encouragement given to my young friends in the latter pages being especially delightful to me, and I daresay to other "parents and guardians." I notice *Good Words* (Christmas number, entitled "A Cure of Souls," by G. Manville Fenn—a writer who is not usually so much at home with rectors) chiefly for the reason that it announces a Paper next year by Mr. Gladstone on "Modern Criticism"; the *Sunday Magazine* (Christmas number, "A Girl of the People") for the reason that Archdeacon Farrar promises a series of Papers on Bede, Anselm, and other worthies down to Dante and Fra Angelico.

I have also received *The Sun*, *Cassell's Magazine*, *Indian Magazine*, *Old and New London*, *Popular Educator*, *Encyclopedic Dictionary*, *Holy Land* and the Bible, *Cornhill*, *Blackwood's English Grammar* and *Analysis III.*—VI., *The Report of the National Vigilance Association*, *Night and Day*, the *Daily Graphic* (preliminary number), *The Loveliest Woman in London*, a wretched paper-covered novel, *The Social Outlook* (edited by Herbert V. Mills), *Christian Million* and *Yule Tide*, with coloured pictures, and *Word and Work*.

THE COMING WEEK.

—O—

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Wednesday and Thursday, Sale of Work.
LIVERPOOL.—Wednesday, Lecture at The Institute.
LONDON.—Essex Hall, Wednesday and Thursday, Bazaar to raise funds for a Convalescent Home.
ACCRINGTON.—Saturday, Sale of Work.

WE are requested to announce that the special Christmas number of the *Sunday School Helper*, which consists of a service of song on the Life and Work of Jesus, is now quite out of print, but the publishers hope to have in a second edition next week.

A NEW BOOK, NOW READY, BY JOHN PAGE HOPPS.—"The Little Wicket Gate to Life." A Christmas Book for the Young, one shilling. "Sermons for Our Day," Part IV., concluding the Series, one shilling. Also "Twenty Sermons for Our Day," in purple and gold, two shillings. Post free from the Author, Lea Hurst, Leicester.

The Inquirer.

A Religious Political, and Literary Newspaper and Record of Reverent
Free Thought.

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LONDON, DECEMBER 7, 1889.

GREAT POLITICAL PROPOSALS.

If activity betokens health in the body politic we ought to be satisfied with the signs of the times. Hardly a morning passes without the appearance in the papers of reports of speeches by leading politicians. The last two weeks have been especially noteworthy in this respect, though what has been called "Parliament out of doors" has been in full session ever since the leaves began to fall. The great gatherings at Nottingham and Manchester, where the respective leaders of the two largest sections of the political world made their manifestoes, have been full of interest in many ways. The ripening of social questions is evinced by the extraordinary amount of attention bestowed on them at those meetings, both by the leaders and by their immediate followers, who are, indeed, in some degree, the leaders of the leaders. Lord SALISBURY and Mr. GLADSTONE are both old hands at Parliamentary practice. They have to be wary, diplomatic, discreet. Politics is, in practice, a series of compromises, and the most skilful leader is he who knows when to "give" and when to "take." That both statesmen are "giving" on social questions is the surest sign of their conviction that the pressure in the ranks is getting too strenuous to be restrained much longer. Judicious promises may relieve for a time; their performance may be tardy; but it must come. We prefer to believe that the offers of great social reforms made by one side and the other are really due to this deepening sense of the necessity for action, more or less speedy, than to attribute them to meaner motives. To credit either of the great leaders with all the vices of a trickster, or with exclusive possession of the virtues of a Heaven-born patriot, would be alike absurd. Men are susceptible to the influence of material considerations of course; and "expediency" is an elastic term applicable to the view of gaining votes, as well as to that of securing the national well-being. But surely the meaning of all this talk about lessening the hours of labour if possible, adjusting the burdens of taxation to the right shoulders, freeing the members of organic communities from every shred of undue outside interference, abolishing inequalities before the law, and, in general, seeking to promote liberty and to provide comfort for the masses of our countrymen, is not that it is simple electioneering verbiage. In some mouths it may be; but in many it is not. Earnest as never before, there are scores and hundreds of leading men who are determined to do what they can to solve, as far as legislative enactments will help them to solve, the great problems of poverty and vice which confront us all along the path we go, growing with our growth like an evil shadow, and sometimes threatening to eclipse the very light of hope.

The important question which, it appears to us, these great proposals of our politicians bring uppermost before us is, how far can legislative enactments secure the abolition of the evils that so afflict our nation? To answer such a question at all wisely needs more patient thought than in a hurrying age men are apt to give to it. The excitement of party warfare, the intense dislike of men as well as of measures, the struggle and competition of rivals for power, all tend to create an atmosphere of mixed emotions, through which the calm light of reason finds but little way. Suppose a Parliament to be elected which disestablishes and disendows the Church, provides free education (with penny dinners or without), makes the ninth hour of labour per day penal, and shuts up the public-houses in various sections dotted about the country. Suppose ground-rents to be taxed, and allotments to be made easy of attainment; suppose leaseholds to be enfranchised, and London to have control of its police, while Irish politics subside (if it be supposable) into a peaceful rivalry of patriots at Dublin or elsewhere. What follows? Can all the crowned heads of Europe engage to make one shoeblack happy? asks CARLYLE. We have no desire to pessimistically follow in the wake of that gloomy sage, but the question is worth considering, whether there is not some danger of over-estimating the effect of these proposed changes.

That they, or some of them, would very materially assist in lessen-

ing the evils which we deplore we admit and we maintain; and the party that frees the helpless from the yoke of the tyrant, whether that yoke be imposed by ignorance, or by mere weakness and inability to get before one's competitors, deserves and will win lasting honour in history. But Freedom, glorious as it is, is not all. To truly profit by Freedom the citizen must be more than a docile voter. To rightly enjoy increased means of living the labourer must have in himself right principles of conduct. In how many homes in this country, where there is already leisure, freedom, wealth, and health, there is wanting just that which alone can save the possessors of these inestimable advantages from gloom, from wasted lives, from vice and its attendant miseries? Education which does not develop the nobler faculties is something worse than useless. Riches that brings only the means of gratifying ill-regulated desires must be deemed worse than poverty itself. Investigation among the most hopeless and helpless of our poor reveals the heartrending fact that many of them are down in the gutter, not because they have been pushed there by others, but because their own folly and wickedness have dragged them thither. Men who began life with all the advantages of social position and of mental education contribute a shocking proportion to the human wreckage that appals us. Such reflections render it incumbent on every ardent social reformer to look to it that his programme, lengthy as it may be, contains a demand not only for the enactments which form such excellent devices for the political banner, but also for that culture of the higher nature of man in which, as in all ages, the true happiness and peace are to be found. In the excitement of the moment it is only too possible that the duty of maintaining the Church should seem to be less important than that of maintaining the political Club. Experience will eventually lead to a proper estimate of the relative worth of all such institutions. By all means teach and stimulate men to desire such changes as shall enrich their lives. But to such as are busy about these important things we would earnestly commend the words spoken of old, "What shall it profit a man, any number of men if they 'gain the whole world, and lose their souls!" As they strive earnestly, none more earnestly, we believe, than Unitarians, for political reforms will they not be equally earnest about the maintenance and furtherance of those institutions which are devised to directly foster the purest emotions, and to inculcate the principles of a life according to spiritual law?

THE LATE PROFESSOR ELMSLIE.

THE very brief notice in our issue of the 23rd ult. hardly said all that we should like to say of the late Professor Elmslie. He is now beyond danger of inconvenience from Unitarian praise, and we may therefore say without hesitation that though not with us he was in the best sense of the word of us; that is to say, he was what we, each according to his opportunities, aspire to be. He was learned, candid, and devout. He was a diligent student and a competent teacher of the Old Testament; he fully recognised the value of modern criticism, and those who have read his reviews in the *Expositor* or elsewhere do not need to be assured that his own views were as thoroughly modern as his general spirit was Christian. No reviewer gave a more hearty and intelligent welcome to Dr. Cheyne's translation and commentary on the Psalms than did Professor Elmslie in the *British Weekly*; and it is noticeable that in the last column he ever wrote for that paper he refers to Baur as the "riverhead of New Testament criticism." In reading Professor Elmslie's ardently loyal account of his tutor, Professor A. B. Davidson, the thought presents itself that one at least of Dr. Davidson's students had caught some of his teacher's characteristics. We are tempted to believe, he said, so unpretentious is Dr. Davidson's manner, that he wishes "to take precautions against notoriety. Where other men would have published a portentous volume, and blown a trumpet, our author has slipped out his good things by stealth." And for a very finely-worded apology for what is regarded as destructive Biblical criticism the reader may turn to the same article (*Expositor*, January, 1888). After describing the ruthless process of the critical lecturer, he adds, "It was not disinheritance but disimprisonment. We had been set at liberty from a dark dungeon" [namely, the traditional interpretation], "and found ourselves out on God's broad green earth, with the free air of heaven about us, and the blue sky over us." God forbid that we should call the writer of those words a Unitarian, or a Rationalist, or any other name that he could not heartily accept for himself; but let it be here acknowledged that the work which the best Unitarians are trying to do he was also doing, and whatever he may have thought of us we are bound to think of him as a worthy fellow-worker, whose good work was all too soon cut short by the mysterious stroke of death.

NOTES AND NEWS.

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MESSRS. REMINGTON have brought out a new story, entitled "Boy-cotted," by Mabel Morley.

MR. ELLIOT STROCK advertises "A Handbook of Literary and Scientific Bible Difficulties."

HELMSLEY BLACKMOOR is a parish of 36½ square miles on the borders of the Yorkshire Moors. £10,000 is asked for to provide for its sub-division into smaller parishes.

AN appeal is made on behalf of the Invalid Children's Aid Association, 18, Buckingham-street, Strand. It works chiefly by means of visitors to the houses of the sick poor, and organises the transference of the convalescent little patients to suitable homes.

ON the occasion of a young minister assuming his second charge Dr. Ezra Stiles Gannett counselled him to burn every vestige that he had gathered in his first one.

SCHLEIERMACHER, the greatest preacher of his day, composed his sermons on his mile and a half walk to the church where they were delivered. Some of the worst preachers of our day do the same.

THE REV. HUGH PRICE HUGHES claims to have netted three-hundred new Wesleyans by the late special mission at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly.

THE Peace Society suggests the Sunday before Christmas Day as an especially appropriate occasion for pulpit reference to the cause of international arbitration.

IN this month's *Contemporary Pulpit* Dr. Dods says that, "While Christ by his death effected what no other can effect, he acted in a manner in which every Christian is bound to act." Also "to share in the benefits of Christ's sacrifice is most truly to sacrifice ourselves."

A CONGREGATIONAL Church announces "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons for Men," and a Baptist minister is giving a series of afternoon talks, entitled "Quaint themes and queer people." Anything that will make the Sabbath a day for the service of man, is welcome.

MARIE THÉRÈSE, a French Sister of Mercy, has just received the Cross of the Legion of Honour. At Balaclava, when she was only twenty years of age, she was wounded when attending in the trenches. She received further wounds at Majuta and Worth, and has served besides in Syria, China, and Mexico.

HERE is an "echo" from Cardiganshire.—Judge (to witness, a boy): Do you go to chapel on Sunday? Boy: No. Judge (astonished): Do you go to any place of worship? Boy: No. Judge (more astonished): Where do you go on Sundays? Boy (unmoved): To church. (Laughter in court and collapse of Judge, a well-known Churchman.—*Nonconformist*.)

THE week's obituary includes the names of Mr. Martin Tupper, Mr. C. H. R. Marriott, the song writer; Mr. John Borlase, J.P., of Penzance; the Rev. Richard Thomas, of Holyhead, Baptist minister; Sir H. D. Torrens, Governor of Malta; Dr. Cuthbertson, of the City of London School; Prof. McNab, botanist; Sir Percy Shelley, son of the poet; Admiral Massingberd.

THE total contributions to Foreign Missions by the various Churches during last year are estimated at £1,334,491. The sum total is divided as follows:—Church of England, £541,773; Joint Societies of Churchmen and Nonconformists, £208,472; Nonconformist Societies, £392,272; Scotch and Irish Presbyterians, £183,219; Roman Catholics, £8,755. Canon Scott Robertson estimates that the Church of England contributions are £646,000.

A VERY intelligent and charming woman said to Dr. Hale, some fifteen years ago, when he had gone to a growing little city for the dedication of a Unitarian Church: "A Unitarian Church to you merely means one more name on your calendar. To the people of this town it means better books, better music, better sewerage, better health and better life, less drunkenness, more purity, and better government."

IT is stated that the Vicar of Hoo, who has so openly defied the law and flaunted his defiance of Lord Penzance's Court, is about to give way, and will not go to prison. Prison or no prison he has set a disgraceful example of official disobedience, which would have been rated at its true value and met with its due punishment had the perpetrator been an officer in any other branch of Her Majesty's service.

IN days not long gone by, when every misfortune was regarded as a direct judgment of God, the burning of the Headquarters of the Salvation Army would have been considered by some persons as a solemn warning, of which due note should be taken by the Salvationists and their supporters. Of course it is a warning, but not in the sense these good people would have deemed it so, and no doubt General Booth will profit by it with his usual wisdom.

THE REV. R. A. Armstrong writes a remonstrance to the *National Reformer* concerning the language of a Scotch correspondent, who

described Unitarianism as "professing a creed mainly remarkable for its moral cowardice and intellectual poverty," with other remarks in the same style. Mr. Armstrong expresses some surprise at seeing such language in the *Reformer*, and contrasts it with the dignity and courtesy shown to him by Mr. Bradlaugh. But we are afraid that Mr. Bradlaugh is altogether exceptional in this matter. Neither gentleness of manner nor breadth of sympathy is a prevailing characteristic of the extreme negative school.

A NEWSPAPER controversy has continued to rage around the "Rev. John Hunter's sermon at Hull." The preacher's offence was that he spoke of a "lazy, stupid trust in something done in Palestine 1,850 years ago." Probably those who have been so frightfully shocked at this language would admit if straightly questioned that the words describe what is sometimes an actual fact. Many orthodox people know perfectly well that the "trust" inculcated by such hymns as "Jesus paid it all" is certainly stupid, and may be lazy as well. But heresy hunters are so keen that a preacher needs even when denouncing positive vice to add "saving my orthodoxy."

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM, M.P., lecturing at Barton-hill, near Bristol, last week, said: "When our Father in heaven gave us this world to live on and cultivate he did not intend that it should be so possessed as that only a fraction of his children should be benefited by the beneficent gift that he intended for the good of all. The rain descends, the sun shines, the winds blow, the tides rise and fall for the good of all, and human pride, selfishness, ignorance, and greed must not be allowed to stand in the way of the use of the land so as to feed and benefit all. The present system neither feeds the people nor provide labour (to any adequate extent) for the people. If you ask me whether I want to destroy the principle of 'private ownership' in land, I reply certainly not, if you can so work private ownership as to secure the best results from the cultivation of the soil; but we are not doing that now."

THE *New York Independent* having given ample space to reports of Conferences of Unitarian, Roman Catholic, and other denominations, an old and warm friend of the paper writes to complain, and says: "I want to know what pure Christians are doing? Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and other Evangelical Churches, not Catholics, Unitarians, and infidels." The *Independent* rebukes its correspondent in suitable terms. We wish we could say that this narrowness were confined to members of orthodox churches. Unfortunately we have come across specimens of it among those who ought to know better, and who seem to think that the *Inquirer* has no right to devote any portion of its space to chronicling the doings of any but Unitarian churches, or the sayings of any but Unitarians. We are happy to believe, however, that this is an exceptional view; and the more our readers learn of the good things said and done by people belonging to other sections of the Church, the more exceptional it will become.

THERE is a curious argument, two columns in length, against "the cultus of the Blessed Virgin," in the *Church Times*. The writer considers the worship of Mary heretical and morally disastrous; under the last head he says it is a favourite cult with profligate women. The following sentence strikes us as peculiar:—

"A common defence of it is that it is a conclusion flowing naturally from the doctrine of the Incarnation; but to that the decisive reply is the total silence of St. John, the Evangelist of the Incarnation, who, moreover, as the adopted son of the Blessed Virgin, must have been in her confidence, and would have recorded for us anything concerning her position and privileges which she deemed necessary to communicate."

Whatever may be thought of the arguments of the *Church Times* we are happy to agree with its doctrine in this instance, viz., that the worship of the Virgin is morally unhealthy, and has no countenance in the Scriptures.

EVERY reader of Boswell remembers that Johnson, speaking of a play, remarked, "It has not wit enough to keep it sweet," and then added, "It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction," apparently as an explanation of his first remark. We learn from the *Baptist* that Mr. Spurgeon has been explaining his own and other people's proverbs in an equally lucid style in his "Salt Cellars." Many of these are good, but frequently he gives a pithy saying, and then a comment in truly phenomenal fashion, e.g.:—

"Many drops make a shower." Comment: "Combinations of little may accomplish great results. 'The worse the carpenter the more the chips.'" Comment: "He who does his work well makes little fuss about it, but the incapable workman buries himself under the rubbish he creates. 'Wheat in a barn is better than chaff in a church.'" Comment: "A few poor saints in the meanest room excel all the unconverted nobility and gentry of the district when assembled in the most magnificent cathedral."

If it were all in this vein Mr. Spurgeon's book would be like the copy of the "Pilgrim's Progress," which, as a humble reader told the editor was "all plain except the notes."

CHURCHES AND SOCIETIES.

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(Secretaries and others are particularly requested to send their reports—which should be as brief as convenient—not later than Tuesday, otherwise such matter must be condensed or postponed.)

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LEICESTER: NORTH MIDLAND SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

The southern branch of this Association held its annual conference in the Great Meeting schoolroom, Bond-street, Leicester, on Saturday, Nov. 23. There was a good attendance of teachers and friends from the four schools included in the district. After tea the more serious part of the programme commenced, under the presidency of the Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS. The election of officers and thanks for past services soon brought the formal business to an end.

The Rev. W. AGAR read a letter from the Rev. W. A. Clarke, of Hinckley, regretting his inability to be present, and speaking in warm terms of the enjoyment and helpfulness of former meetings, and the cordial relations that had existed between himself and the teachers of the district.

On the motion of the CHAIRMAN it was resolved to reply to Mr. Clarke's letter, expressing the regret of the friends to part with his hearty fellowship, and wishing him all possible prosperity, health, and usefulness in his new sphere of labour at Swansea.

Mr. JOHN OLDHAM, of Loughborough, was then called upon to read his Paper on the "Duty of Sunday-school Teachers." After briefly alluding to the grave error of simply permitting the scholars to read round with little comment, conversation, or illustration, he urged teachers to do all in their power to break up the dull formalism and stiffness of much class work, and to make it more direct, simple, frank, and homely. He thought that the children should be better grounded in the Unitarian position, so that they could give a reason for the faith, and be able to withstand against the allurements and temptations held out to them to join other and more largely-attended schools. Before this could be done the teachers themselves needed to be better educated in the principles of the faith. The reader threw out many interesting suggestions to guide teachers in interesting their scholars and supplementing their work upon week day evenings, especially emphasising Temperance Societies, Social Clubs, Fortnightly Entertainments, Private Dancing Classes properly conducted, and other agencies of a similar character. The Paper was direct and practical, and led to an informal conversational discussion. The talk centred round the advisability or otherwise of dancing classes in connection with Sunday-schools, and the mode and utility of doctrinal teaching.

The Rev. E. D. PRIESTLEY EVANS, of Loughborough, then read an able and earnest Paper on the subject of "Church Membership: With a View to the Attaching and Retaining in Connection with our Congregational Life of our Elder Scholars and Young People." Before the teacher could hope to lead his scholars into helpful communion with the Church he must make them feel that he was much more and much better than their teacher; that he was their sincere and sympathetic friend, ready at all times to interest himself in all their doing, willing to hear from their lips their tales of difficulty, their hopes for the future, their little secrets, and their burdens of sorrow. There must be perfect harmony between the scholar and the teacher. If this existed the latter could not help but be a link between the school and the Church. Let him take his scholars to his home, and do his best to refine their tastes and direct their sympathies and purposes. Above all, let him educate their affections. The great majority of people, both young and old, care little for systems of doctrine, but they care much for friendship. Mr. Evans advocated a special ceremony of introduction for the young people joining the Church, and enlarged upon the usefulness of symbolism all through life. He emphasised the need of clear convictions in our religious faith. The love so manifest in many minds connected with our Churches for an undefined happiness was doing much harm to our young scholars. People were longing for clear convictions, and if they could not get them in our societies they would go elsewhere. Let the teacher educate the affections first, and then teach his scholars his own clear, strong convictions upon the vital things of morality and religion, and he would have done his best to retain his scholars in a useful and helpful communion with his own Church.

A discussion ensued, and an interesting meeting was brought to a conclusion by a hearty vote of thanks to the readers of the Papers, and to the Great Meeting friends for their kind hospitality.

SHORT REPORTS.

BARNARD CASTLE.—On Monday the teachers and scholars of the Free Christian Sunday School gave their annual tea and entertainment to their friends and well-wishers. Mr. H. W. Harrison presided.

BIRMINGHAM: MISSION TO THE POOR.—The annual meeting was held on the 25th ult., under the presidency of Mr. H. Lakin Smith. There were also present Mrs. Nettlefold, Mrs. Gladstone, Mrs. Lakin Smith, Miss Whitfield, the Rev. Dr. Crosskey, Messrs. Priestley Smith, W. Lowe, J. Mott, W. J. B. Tranter, E. H. Lee (treasurer), and T. H. Russell (hon. secretary). The committee, in their report, stated that much as they regretted the removal of their operations from Lawrence-street to Fazeley-street the experiment had proved in every way a success. Many of those who had laboured so long and so well in connection with the Mission and its various institutions, and some of the regular attendants at the services in Lawrence-street, still remained attached to it. The committee also heard, with great satisfaction, that the premises in Lawrence-street were still to be used for philanthropic work, the Birmingham Kyrle Society having taken them for the purposes of a recreation room and boys' club. Mrs. Beale had, with the assistance of Miss F. Ryland, continued to conduct her mothers' sewing meetings with great success, and the interest evinced in these gatherings was shown by the large numbers attending. The committee expressed their regret at the death of Miss Phipson, and their satisfaction with the work carried on by Mr. Reed, the regular missionary. They also dwelt upon the insufficiency of income with which the committee had to contend, and appealed for increased help. The treasurer's statement, read by Mr. E. H. Lee, showed that the income for the year had been £150 from subscriptions; £92 7s. 1d. from collections, and £145 10s. 6d. from other sources. The expenditure of the year had been £319 13s. 11d., and the balance due to the treasurer had been increased from £38 3s. to £69 9s. 4d. Mr. Reed read an interesting detailed account of his work; and the Chairman in moving the adoption of the report, said that experience had abundantly proved the need of the labours of the Mission in the Fazeley-street district, and it was because such agencies were not more numerous that they found such sin and misery, and certain forms of vice as there existed. The Rev. Dr. Crosskey, in seconding the resolution, rejoiced that the Church of the Messiah, which principally consisted of those placed in happier circumstances, had gone out into the lowest parts of the town, and in Lawrence-street and Fazeley-street had been brought into touch with the most outcast classes of society, and the most desolate and desolating poverty. The report was adopted, and the usual votes of thanks were afterwards passed.

BOLTON DISTRICT SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION.—The third annual meeting of the above was held at the Unitarian School, Chowbent, on Saturday last. Previous to the meeting tea was provided, about eighty teachers and friends sitting down, after which the assembly increased to 150. Almost all the schools of the district were represented at the meeting, including Asley, Bolton, Chorley, Chowbent, Hindley, Leigh, Park-lane, Rivington, and Walmesley. Mr. James Grundy, chairman for the current year, gave a brief recapitulation of the work which had been accomplished during his term of office. He mentioned one important institution which had been inaugurated—viz., that of a "Teachers' Home Reading Circle," which he believed would be of much benefit to the teachers themselves, not only from the fact of reading and studying the selected book, but from the discussions which might take place on the matter they contained. Mr. Grundy also spoke of the appointment which had been made this year of a Sunday-school visitor in connection with the Union. The Secretary, Mr. Gilbert B. Dorrington, read the minutes of the last annual meeting, and these being confirmed the committee's report, which had previously been printed and circulated, and which gave an outline of the labours which had engaged the attention of the committee during the year (one special feature being the engagement of the Rev. George St. Clair, F.G.S., lecturer to the Palestine Exploration Fund, to address the teachers on the "Lost Cities of the East,") was adopted, on the motion of the Rev. J. Kirk Pike, seconded by Mr. T. S. Johnson (Chowbent). The treasurer's statement having been adopted, the election of officers for the year 1890 resulted as follows:—Chairman, the Rev. J. Kirk Pike; vice-chairman, Mr. Jas. Grundy; secretary, Mr. Walter Simpson; treasurer, Mr. Joseph Chadderton; auditor, Mr. Gilbert B. Dorrington. The Rev. P. Vancesmith, M.A. (Hindley), was appointed delegate to the London Sunday School Association; and Mr. Charles Nicholson (Bolton) was elected.

BRIDPORT.—The second of the series of special services which is being held here once each month during the winter took place last Sunday evening. There was an even larger congregation than on the first occasion, a most encouraging fact, showing how much the first was appreciated. This time not only was every seat occupied, both in the body of the chapel and in the galleries, but chairs had to be placed in the aisles. The Rev. H. S. Solly took as the subject of his address the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and Miss Edwards, of Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, sang three solos, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour," "I will arise" and "Angels ever bright and fair."

CIRENCESTER.—Our minister delivered, on Sunday night last, an address to young men on "Character, Culture, and Religion." There was an excellent audience, many young men being present. Deep and growing interest is being taken in the special services. On Tuesday night Mr. Austin lectured in the Town Hall, Cricklade, on "Eternal Hope." About 280 persons were present. The Rev. H. Hill, of Stroud, presided. An animated discussion followed.

DEVONPORT: CHRIST CHURCH.—Wednesday last being the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of Christ Church, Devonport, the members of the Unitarian Christian Church at Devonport and some of their friends held a social gathering in commemoration of the event at Bosworthick's Rooms, Marlborough-street, Devonport. After tea the Chairman (Mr. J. A. Boulds) gave a sketch of the past history of their society, remarked that during his connection with it—which extended over a period of sixty-three years, from the time when they held their religious services in the room in Fore-street, now occupied by the Liberal Club, to when they built the chapel in Granby-street, and on to the time when the present church was completed—they had been subject to many changes of fortune. There had been an ebb and flow more than once, and although, to use a nautical phrase, they had grounded many times, yet they had never been shipwrecked; and they had found when they floated again that they were in a better condition than before. Their beautiful church, he was glad to be able to say, remained to them as proof of the zeal and ability of those who had been fellow workers with them in the past. They deeply regretted that those fellow workers had been removed from among them, and they regretted also that their places had not been filled up by new members. Whilst, however, they could not say that they were a large number of Unitarians inside the Church, yet he thought they could say there were a large and still increasing number outside the Church that ought to be inside it; and without obtruding their opinions offensively or forcing them on others they

were finding their way amongst thoughtful men, and so they had to do their best and wait. He considered they had much to be thankful for. They were able to hold their own opinions and worship according to the dictates of their own consciences, and when they spoke or thought of God it was as the wise and loving Father of all mankind. They considered that to be the Gospel Jesus Christ taught, and believing his words, they were relieved from the dread and fear of an angry or avenging God, an everlasting Hell, and an eternal damnation. This afforded them great consolation, and all they could do was to hope that the time would come when not only their little Church but the Church Universal would be filled with believers in the same glorious faith. The Rev. William Binns, of Plymouth Unitarian Church, a former minister of the Devonport congregation, also addressed the meeting. During the evening a pleasant entertainment of music, songs, and readings was given by ladies and gentlemen chiefly belonging to the congregation.

HOLBECK.—A bazaar for the purpose of raising funds for decorating the chapel and school premises, providing a new organ for the chapel, and other objects, was opened in the school-rooms on Wednesday, Nov. 27, by Sir James Kitson, Bart., and continued on Thursday and Saturday. It was well patronised, and the sum realised by it is about £250.

HUNDERSFIELD.—The anniversary sermons were preached on Sunday week by the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, and on the Monday following the congregational tea was held. Mr. J. Blackburn presided. There were on the platform the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, Liverpool; the Rev. B. Constable, Dewsbury; the Rev. H. Rawlings, Mr. J. Lupton, Leeds, and Mr. E. Culley. The Chairman gave a short address, and Mr. J. Lupton spoke at some length, expressing very hopeful views of the future of the church under Mr. Rawlings' pastorate; and referred in feeling terms to the death of the late Mr. Stannard, of Milton Church. The Rev. R. A. Armstrong, in the course of an address, said an effort had been recently made on the part of the Unitarian ministers of Liverpool to get the rest of the ministry—Church and Dissent—to join together in common action on moral topics, and said the ministry—including one of the Canons of the Church of England—had responded well to the invitation, and in the Institute they had a very friendly discussion on the duties of ministers of religion in connection with moral subjects. This increased liberalism in the other churches made the task of their own churches all the harder, and it did not absolve them from the task they had in hand. Votes of thanks concluded the meeting.

LEIGH.—On Tuesday evening the fourth of a series of lectures was given in the King-street Chambers, Leigh, by the Rev. J. Kirk Pike, of Atherton, on "Thoughts of a Unitarian Concerning the Life to Come." There was a large and attentive audience. Last Sunday the Rev. P. Holt preached. Since the lectures commenced large numbers have attended.

LONDON: BEDFORD CHAPEL.—The Rev. Stopford A. Brooke preached on behalf of the Silvertown strikers on Sunday morning, and a collection was taken. Mr. Brooke will receive and forward sums sent to him for relief fund.

LONDON: GUILD OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.—The monthly meeting of the Guild was held in the Essex Church Schoolroom on Thursday week, Nov. 28, and was attended by fifty-four members and friends. The devotional portion of the service was conducted by the Warden (the Rev. W. Carey Walters), after which a Paper on "Harmonious Service" was read by Mr. William Tate, followed by an interesting discussion, in which the Revs. C. L. Corkran and W. Carey Walters and Messrs. H. Jeffery and I. M. Wade took part. During the evening a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Miss Talbot for embroidering a handsome banner for the Guild. The next meeting will be held at Kentish Town on Thursday, Jan. 2, 1890, due notice of which will appear in this paper.

LONDON: NORTH-STREET (EDGEWARE-ROAD) MISSION STATION.—We have received the following letter, and heartily recommend it to notice:—"As I have made no public appeal for pecuniary and other help in connection with the work at my station for more than a year, the idea may have got abroad that I am well provided, and do not stand in need of any. I write to dispel this idea. My Poor's Purse is empty, and cold winter weather is already upon us. The fund which provides for winter parties is all spent—more than all spent, indeed; whilst my Sunday-school is larger than ever before. As every branch of the mission work is growing I stand in urgent need of help, not only in these, but in other respects. Every day I have proof of the consolidation of the work. I therefore feel sure that my appeal—very earnest, as the need is urgent—will meet with a quick and generous response.—THOMAS ROBINSON, 5, Finchley-road, Child's-hill, N.W."

LONDON: RHYL-STREET MISSION.—We have received the following letter:—"As Christmas time is close upon us I would, through the columns of your valuable paper, draw attention to the growing needs of the very poor neighbourhood in the midst of which the Rhyll-street Mission is situated. There is every probability of a very hard winter for the poor, and I would earnestly solicit aid to enable me, to some extent, to relieve the distress prevalent. I would also ask for contributions towards our Sunday-school scholars' treat and Christmas tree. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by yours, &c.,—JOSEPH POLLARD (Missionary), 19, Dunollie-road, N.W.; or Miss ANNA SHARPE, The Grove, Hampstead, N.W."

MANCHESTER.—The fifth service of the series was held in the Hulme Town Hall on Sunday afternoon last. The hall was filled, upwards of five hundred being present. The Rev. Frank Walters, Newcastle-on-Tyne, conducted the service, and delivered an address on the parable of the "Prodigal Son," which contained passages of profound feeling and eloquence, which deeply and visibly moved many of the audience. The singing was most effectively led by Mr. Thomas Rawson's choir; and the solos sung by Miss Clara Hough and Mr. G. H. Lawton were beyond all praise. Next Sunday the service will be conducted by the Rev. J. J. Wright, Bolton.

MANSFIELD.—Through the kind liberality of William Hollins, Esq., some extensive and beautiful alterations are to be effected in the interior of the Old Meeting House, at the cost of some hundreds of pounds. A panelled dado of oak will be carried round the building to the height of the window sills on each side, and raised several feet higher behind the pulpit and the choir stalls, and again at the "West" end between, and to the height of the doors, where it will be carved. The glass of the side windows will be replaced by tinted cathedral panes; and we understand that two coloured windows are to be placed in the chancel, the gifts respectively of the late Mr. George Mallatratt and of Mr. Birks. The walls on each side of the communion table will be retiled after an artistic pattern, and the pulpit will be furnished with new fittings in brass. Other improvements are to be effected, and the work will be carried out by Mr. Charles Vallance according to plans supplied by Mr. T. Locke Worthington, A.R.I.B.A., of Westminster, and is expected to be finished by the end of February in the new year. On and after to-morrow the services will be conducted in the school-room at the usual hours.

NOTTINGHAM: CHRIST CHURCH.—On the 28th ult. our minister, the Rev. E.

R. Hodges, read a Paper before the local Naturalists' Society on "The Spectroscope: its History and Uses." Briefly defining the reflection and refraction of light, and the discovery by Sir Isaac Newton of its decomposition by the prism, the Paper then dealt with the dark bands in the solar spectrum first noticed by Wollaston; the "lines" studied and mapped by Fraunhofer; the researches of Fox Talbot, Sir J. Herschel, Brewster, and others on coloured flame spectra; and Bunsen's discovery of two new metals. The great problem of the dark lines solved by Kirchhoff, and his grand generalisation that the spectra of the solar elements identify them with those familiar to us, was sketched out. The three groups of spectra, i.e., continuous, bright lined, and absorption spectra, each received illustration. The Paper concluded with an account of the application of spectrum analysis in chemistry and astro-physics, representative to the Manchester District Sunday School Association. A special vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Gilbert B. Dornig, who had not only acted as secretary *pro tem.* during the formation of the Union, but who had filled the office of secretary from its commencement, Nov. 26, 1886. The next subject which engaged the attention of the meeting was the recommendation emanating from the committee, that the pastors of each of the congregations in affiliation with the Union should become ex-officio members of the committee. This matter was freely debated upon, and eventually the meeting decided that the recommendation should not be accepted; but that the constitution of the committee should be composed, as formerly, of representatives elected from each affiliated school. The members of the "Teachers' Home Reading Circle" then discussed the book which had been read during the last quarter, viz., "The Childhood of Jesus," by the Rev. W. C. Gannett (U.S.). Reply postcards, printed in skeleton, had been sent out in the early part of the week, with a request that readers should state difficulties experienced, and which could be answered at the annual meeting. The Rev. J. J. Wright officiated as leader, and endeavoured to explain the difficulties which had been presented. He afterwards gave a short description of the book which had been selected to be read during the next quarter (the Rev. Frank Millson's "Lessons on an English Bible"), and heartily invited the friends present to join the "Circle." A number of the books which had been purchased for the purpose were rapidly disposed of, and several names were given in as reading members. Mr. Hotchkiss (Hindley) then read an interesting Paper on "Sunday Schools Fifty Years Ago"; and the Paper was followed by an address by Mr. Barrow (the Sunday-school Visitor) on "Sunday-schools as they are to-day," and by Mr. Gordon and Mr. Kerfoot on "Sunday-schools as they ought to be." At intervals during the evening the Chorbent friends contributed music. Taken as a whole, the meeting was one of the most successful which have been held since the formation of the Union.

SHEFFIELD.—A large gathering assembled at the Channing Hall on the 28th ult., under the presidency of the Rev. J. Manning, M.A., when an interesting elocutionary and musical entertainment was given by the Misses Muriel and Ethel Freckleton, daughters of the Rev. T. W. Freckleton, who occupied the pulpit of Upper Chapel for three months during the recent interregnum. The first-named lady is an accomplished elocutionist, the latter a violinist of more than common skill, and they were able, therefore, to essay the somewhat arduous task of sustaining the evening's programme entirely by themselves. Their efforts met with marked and general appreciation. Miss Muriel Freckleton's selection of recitations was well varied. Her recitals throughout evidenced considerable elocutionary skill, and an accurate and clear conception of the purpose of the authors. Miss Ethel Freckleton's violin solos were equally well received. She first played a charming cavatina by Raff, which was very tastefully rendered, and in the second part "Rigodon" (Monsieur) and some Hungarian dances. The assembly met on the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Greaves.

SOUTH ST. MUNGO-STREET UNITARIAN CHURCH.—A week or two ago the friends of this Church assembled in the school-room, and spent a pleasant evening. The minister, the Rev. W. L. Walker, was in the chair. The occasion was to make a presentation to Mr. T. Garriock, who out of the seventeen years of the church's existence has been its treasurer nine years. The occasion of his recent marriage led the friends to seize the opportunity of showing their appreciation of his services by presenting him with a splendid writing desk, and his wife with a gold brooch. There was good music and singing. Mr. Alex. McIlren, author of "Heart Breathings," read an original poem, and Mr. W. Horton, in a hearty, humorous and able speech, dwelling on the difficulties their church treasurer had to contend with, made the presentation. Mr. Garriock replied in suitable terms, and the meeting broke up after a very enjoyable evening.

TAUNTON.—On the 27th ult. the Rev. A. Blatchford gave a lecture on "Daniel Defoe and Robinson Crusoe." The Rev. J. Worthington occupied the chair. At the close a vote of thanks to the lecturer was proposed by Mr. G. Philpott, seconded by Mr. Edward Goodland, and unanimously carried. A course of Sunday evening lectures is being delivered, the lecturers including the Rev. Jeffrey Worthington, Owen Jones, J. F. Smith, and F. W. Avling. Some stir has been caused by the acceptance of Mr. Aveling of Mr. Worthington's offer to preach at the Unitarian Church, and in his sermon on Sunday last the latter stated that a Church of England clergyman, the pastor of a well-known Trinitarian chapel in London, and the present President of the New Jerusalem Church, had severally occupied his pulpit. On one occasion he was one of three denominations represented in the pulpit on the same Sunday. He believed such fraternising did much good.

WALSALL.—On Sunday week the anniversary of this, the oldest Nonconformist congregation in Walsall, was held. The Rev. P. Dean preached, morning and evening. In the evening service the preacher spoke on "The Wrong and Inexpediency of an Established Church," and pointed out to his hearers that as the successors of those who seceded from St. Matthew's Parish Church in 1662, owing to the unrighteous Act of Uniformity, of Charles II., they were peculiarly called upon to stand up for the Protestant Nonconformity in the town of Walsall.—On Monday evening the annual congregational tea-meeting was held, when there was a good attendance. The Chairman (the Rev. P. Dean) congratulated the meeting on the better state of things in the congregation they had been having during the past two or three months. As regarded the money they were raising, he had never known them previously to be doing so well. In the entertainment which followed the following took part:—Mrs. Wm. Hodgkins, Miss Ellis, Mrs. Ginders, Mr. A. Homer, Miss F. Hodgkins, Mr. Wm. Hodgkins, Mr. J. H. Smith, Mr. and Miss Cherrington and Mr. and Mrs. Dean. Votes of thanks concluded a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

WHITCHURCH, SALOP.—On Sunday last the annual collections (£2 1s. 0½d.) were made in aid of the Midland Christian Union. At the evening service the minister preached on "The Influence of the Drama in Connection with the Life of the Citizen." It is especially encouraging to see the increasing attendances and to know that the men of the town are rallying round the Church and becoming interested in its work.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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(The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. All letters to be inserted must be accompanied by the sender's name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.)

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SOUTH-EASTERN PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY.

SIR,—I looked in vain for a letter from some member of the Croydon congregation in response to the suggestion of Mr. Eiloart's, which appeared in the *Inquirer* a fortnight ago. He has observed that Croydon, like Hastings, is not represented at the Assembly, and would like to know why. I have not been asked by the congregation to write on their behalf on this question, but as I am acquainted with the view generally taken I do not think any one here will be offended at my doing so.

In the first place we ask, why multiply organisations? It seems to us that for all purposes of suggestion or aid, pecuniary or moral, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is sufficient. Why start another society to do what could be as well done by the older, recognised, and respected body? Our congregations are independent bodies, and only need some point of contact with kindred societies, such as is afforded by that excellent body. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association will assist us, or let us severely alone, just as the humour suits to seek it, or go our way without its help; but, like providence, is ever waiting to be gracious when we feel the need of assistance. The Association is based on the only principle that can be accepted by congregations who are resolved to manage their own affairs without the semblance of outside control. It has its hand upon us, but its touch is of the lightest. Association Sunday just reminds us that we have common aims. We are not irritated by fussy recommendations as to what we ought, or ought not to do. And it is altogether exactly suitable to all connected with our churches.

With regard to the South-Eastern Provincial Assembly, Mr. Eiloart quotes from the speech of the Chairman, Mr. Odgers, who said, "its work was not yet clearly defined." And Mr. Eiloart adds, "He might have said it was not defined at all." I have myself inquired what the Assembly are going to do, but no one has satisfied me that they intend to do anything but talk. I do not find, as one would expect to find, that, having discovered some great work which needed to be done, they have formed themselves into a society to do it. On the contrary, they seem to have said, "Let us form a society, and wait to see what will turn up that we can set our hands to do." Somebody, we are told, finds mischief for idle hands to do. I believe that is true, and I fear mischief. In his speech on organisation Dr. Martineau was reported in the *Inquirer*, the date of which I do not remember, to have said, "It would be difficult to devise business for a collective assembly, unless from the first there was collective work to be done. He considered the Lancashire Assembly, of which he was a member, owed much of its useful character to the accident which connected its meetings with those of the widows' fund for that district." Perhaps some lucky accident of the kind will turn up in favour of the new Assembly. Let us hope it may, so as to draw their energies away from the dangerous ground of interfering with independent congregations.

I fear the action of the Assembly will lead to bickerings and disputes, and not to harmony and co-operation. We are told that by joining the Assembly we shall be committed to nothing. We cannot believe that a body of intellectual and earnest men can come together time after time merely to talk. They will have their visions of beauty, which they must perforce try and realise. Then comes the tug of war. We were further informed that we could withdraw at a moment's notice if we did not like it. We could not join an assembly of such men, so earnest, so desirous of effecting some good work, though, what work, does not appear, merely as a wet blanket. Nor, having once thrown in our lot with them could we withdraw at a moment's notice. We, therefore, chose to remain out, at all events until we know exactly what line of work, if any, they strike out.

Croydon, Nov. 27.

JESSE FAGG.

MRS. BESANT.

SIR,—Having attended a lecture last week by Mrs. Besant on "Theosophy" I wish to record my testimony (that of a fellow-woman) of the impression produced on myself, and apparently on the bulk of her audience. That audience consisted mainly of different classes of working men and some women, and it was a singular and suggestive sight to see so large a number of hard-headed, everyday people held in full and earnest attention for over an hour upon "problems of life and mind" which have exercised the wisest brains from all time,

The lecture was admirably delivered, entirely without notes, and with precision, fluency, and occasional subdued eloquence. So far as was possible in the time, a logical, though rapid, sketch was drawn of the history of the Materialism from which Mrs. Besant has emerged, and the Theosophy which she has embraced. The distinctive and speculative doctrines of the latter faith may be open to question, and so may the remedies which Mrs. Besant is known to advocate for our social evils. But no fair-minded person could see and hear her without being convinced, not only of her masculine ability, but of her transparent sincerity, and her genuine desire to benefit her fellow-creatures, and advance what we should call "the Kingdom of God on earth," and what she might perhaps style "the progressive future of the race."

It is surely a great step in advance that a woman so well known, and so influential with the working classes, should, of her own absolutely free and independent intellect, have faced and studied the problem of existence, and have worked her way out from blank Atheism up to a belief in a universe which is, to use her own words, "the unfolding of a Divine Life, functioning in every form of living and non-living thing." So far we are surely at one with her, and further still—in her firm assertion of our personal responsibility, our inevitable influence upon others, and the equally inevitable results for good or evil of our character and conduct. This being so, it seems to me that, instead of looking rather askance at her and her methods, we should welcome her as a fellow-worker for the good and the true.

She is now meeting with obloquy from some of the so-called "Free-thinkers," of whom she is one in a wider and more genuine sense. And, viewed with aversion and distrust as she is by the orthodox and even unorthodox ranks, she is moving on between two fires. Let us, at all events, give her the meed she honestly deserves, and openly acknowledge her as one of those who, without crying, "Lord, Lord!" are still doing the best they know to work the will of the highest they know, which we call God.

E. M. H.

London, Nov. 27.

P.S.—The pamphlet (4d.) entitled "Why I Became a Theosophist," by Annie Besant, will amply repay perusal. Published at 63, Fleet-street.

LIBERAL SOCIAL UNION.—A large gathering of members and friends took place on the 28th ult., at the Rooms of the British Society of Artists, when Mr. J. Ellis read a Paper on "Can we think without words?" in which severe criticism was passed upon Professor Max Müller's teachings on the subject. The discussion which followed was chiefly noticeable for an able speech in support of Mr. Ellis, by Mr. J. D. Robertson. Professor Müller had been invited, but was unable to attend.

DR. LONGSTAFF, Chairman of the Commissioners of the Free Public Library, Wandsworth, has offered to give £2,000, one-half of its liabilities, on the condition that the other £2,000 is raised before March 31 next. In furtherance of this object Mr. H. Kimber, M.P., has kindly invited those who are in favour of this movement to meet at his house, Lansdown Lodge, West Hill, on Saturday, 14th inst., at 3.30 P.M.

THE *Expositor* this month is very interesting, Dr. Jessop dealing with "Primitive Liturgies and Confessions of Faith," Dr. Cheyne with the Twenty-fourth Psalm, and Dr. Dods with recent New Testament Criticism. Many student readers will be most attracted by Mr. H. C. Hoskier's description of Codex B, which, after so much delay and jealousy, is at last issued to the world in photographic facsimile. After reading Mr. Hoskier's justifiably enthusiastic paragraphs they will be ready to add their wish to his that the Czar will now supplement the printed copies of Codex (excellent as they are) by a photographic facsimile to match the great Vatican publication.

A good piece of work has been undertaken by our Hackney congregation. A committee has been engaged for a considerable time in finding suitable accommodation for poor invalids needing convalescent homes, and the number of their clients having very largely increased they have decided to build or secure a Home for themselves. It is to be quite unsectarian, and will extend its benefits to cases from all parts of London and district. To secure funds for this excellent project a bazaar has been arranged for Wednesday and Thursday next at Essex Hall. If we may credit some "private and confidential" whisperings the bazaar is to be rendered memorable for the excellence of its entertainments, and we imagine a host of London friends will take this double opportunity of buying their Christmas presents, and helping a beneficent movement.

EPPS'S COCOA.—GRATEFUL AND COMFORTING.—"By a thorough knowledge of the natural laws which govern the operations of digestion and nutrition, and by a careful application of the fine properties of well-selected Cocos, Mr. Epps has provided our breakfast tables with a delicately flavoured beverage which may save us many heavy doctors' bills. It is by the judicious use of such articles of diet that a constitution may be gradually built up until strong enough to resist every tendency to disease. Hundreds of subtle maladies are floating around us ready to attack wherever there is a weak point. We may escape many a fatal shaft by keeping ourselves well fortified with pure blood and a properly nourished frame." *Civil Service Gazette*.—Made simply with boiling water or milk. Sold only in packets by Grocers, labelled—"JAMES EPPS and Co., Homoeopathic Chemists, London."—Also makers of Epps's Afternoon Chocolate Essence.

OBITUARY.

MR. THOMAS BAKER, KINGSCOTE.

WE regret to have to record the death of Mr. Thomas Baker, of Kingscote, Wokingham, which occurred on the 20th ult., at the age of seventy. Mr. Baker was a native of Ilminster, and a member of a Unitarian family well known in the West of England. He was essentially a reformer, and his early association with Dr. Southwood Smith, the father of sanitary reform, led him to take a very active interest in sanitary and dietetic subjects. He was a vegetarian, and an opponent of vaccination, as well as the popular theories of infection and contagion. His labours to bring his fellow men to a knowledge of what he conceived to be the truth on these and kindred subjects were unceasing, and almost the closing hours of his life were devoted to the preparation of statistics to serve as the basis of evidence he desired to give before the Royal Commission now sitting on the subject of vaccination. The public tyrant ever met in him an uncompromising foe, and his bright hopeful nature led him to throw himself with enthusiasm into many a crusade where his energy and perse-

ance were alike conspicuous. In the Ilminster school case, in 1858-60, Mr. Baker fought single-handed, before the Lords Justices and the House of Lords, for the right of Dissenters to be appointed trustees of endowed schools, and he was mainly instrumental in securing the passing of the Act of Parliament of 1860, which finally secured that right. These and other particulars of his career are set forth in an autobiographical work he published under the title of "A Battling Life in the Civil Service." He was called to the Bar, and published several legal works, the best known of which is that on the "Laws relating to Burials." He also prepared an edition of Dr. Southwood Smith's work on the "Divine Government." In compliance with directions contained in his will, his remains were cremated at Woking on the 25th ult., the religious service being conducted at his residence by the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, B.A.

"THE WORLD AND THE CLOISTER" (Chapman and Hall), by Mr. Oswald John Simon, gives incidentally a "representation of modern Judaism, and explains the True Mission of Israel." Mr. Simon belongs to the "advanced" school of Jewish thinkers.

OUR CALENDAR.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8.

It is requested that notices of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday Afternoon.

LONDON.

Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. STOFFORD BROOKE.
 Bermondsey, Fort-road, Upper Grange-road, 11 A.M., Rev. G. CARTER, and 7 P.M., Dr. MUMMERY.
 Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. M. AINSWORTH.
 Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. C. J. STREET, M.A.
 Essex Church, The Mall, Notting-hill-gate, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. CARRY WALTERS. Evening: "The Christianity of the Apostles."
 Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-pl., Paragon road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. T. WHITEHEAD.
 Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. B. LLOYD.
 Kentish Town, Free Christian Church, Clarence-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. CLEMENT PIKE.
 Little Portland-street Chapel, near Oxford-circus, 11.15 A.M., Rev. P. H. WICKSTEED, and 7 P.M., Rev. J. TREVOR.
 Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. H. GOW, B.A.
 Peckham, Avondale-road, 11 A.M., Dr. MUMMERY, and 6.30 P.M., Rev. GEORGE CARTER.
 Richmond, Unitarian Christian Church, Channing Hall, Friar's-lane, 11 and 7, Rev. SILAS FARRINGTON.
 Stamford-street, Blackfriars-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. COPELAND BOWIE.
 Stoke Newington, The Green, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. WOODING, B.A.
 Wandsworth, Unitarian Christian Church, East-hill, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
 Wood Green Assembly Rooms, 7 P.M., Rev. T. W. FRECKELTON.

PROVINCIAL.

BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. W. STANLEY.
 BOURNEMOUTH, Conservative Club Assembly Room, St. Michael's Rise, 11 A.M., Rev. G. H. VANCK, B.D.
 BRIGHTON, Christ Church Free Christian, New-road, North-st., 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. ALF. HOOD.
 BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. R. COWLEY SMITH.
 CAMBRIDGE, Devonshire Rooms, Green street, 7 P.M., Rev. P. H. WICKSTEED, M.A.
 CHATHAM, Unitarian Christian Church, Hamond-hill, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. ALLEN.
 CHELTENHAM, Bayshill Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. EPHRAIM TURLAND.
 LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. A. ARMSTRONG, B.A.
 MANCHESTER, Platt Chapel, Rusholme, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. CHAS. T. POYNTING, B.A.
 SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FLETCHER WILLIAMS.
 SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. CHAS. H. WELLBELOVED.
 TORQUAY, Free Christian Church, Bannercross Hall, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. FRANK SHAW.

NOTICE.

** Calendar Advertisements inserted as above, 10s. a year, prepaid. Additional matter 4l. per line. Single Advertisements 6d. per line.

LONDON DISTRICT UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

Special and Urgent Appeal.

As President of the London District Unitarian Society, I venture to make a personal Appeal for increased support to its Funds, and trust that a simple statement of facts will be sufficient to secure your attention and enlist your sympathy.

The Congregations at Croydon, The Mall, Kensington, and Peckham were all originated by the action of the Society, and that at Stamford-street was sustained during a trying crisis by the help given.

These Congregations are now self-supporting, and the District Society has on hand Bermondsey, Deptford, Highgate, Richmond, Stepney, Stratford, and Wandsworth. Each of these places of worship requires assistance, but there is every reason for believing that two, if not three, of them will very shortly be independent of help.

Through the action of the Committee of this Society, the Old Spicer-street Mission was saved from extinction, and at Mansford-street a large amount of work is now being carried on with every prospect of success.

This is no small record of useful work, but it must be evident to all that the present subscription list of £250 is altogether inadequate to enable the Committee to continue the present operations. But each year London increases, and larger demands are made upon us, and if we attach any value to our religious views, it is surely a solemn duty imposed upon us to endeavour to plant a place of religious worship in every suburb of London where there appears a fair promise of support.

Our American brethren are setting us a noble example in raising large funds for the extension of our views, and we in London ought not to hesitate at the present favourable time.

The Debt due to the Treasurer is nearly £400, besides other large liabilities connected with Bermondsey and Stepney; and I venture earnestly to ask you for a donation and increased subscription so greatly needed.—Yours faithfully,
 JAMES CLARKE LAWRENCE.

23, Hyde Park Gardens, W., November, 1889.

The following donations and new annual subscriptions have been promised towards the thousand pounds required:—

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Sir J. Clarke Lawrence...	50	0	0	increased to	20	0
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Miss J. Durning Smith ..	25	0	0	—	—	—
T. Chatfield Clarke, Esq. ...	20	0	0	—	—	—
John Bentley, Esq. ...	15	0	0	—	—	—
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Stanton Wm. Preston, Esq. ...	10	0	0	"	3	3
Mrs. Edwin Lawrence ...	10	0	0	—	—	—
S. T. Gooden, Esq. ...	5	0	0	—	—	—
E. Plimpton, Esq. ...	2	2	0	—	—	—
Rev. W. Carey Walters...	—	—	—	1	1	0

Replies are requested to be addressed to the Treasurer, DAVID MARTINEAU, 6, Christian-street, E., or to STANTON WM. PRESTON, 7, Eldon-road, Hampstead, N.W., Hon. Sec.

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ETHICAL SOCIETY, Essex Hall, Strand, Dec. 8, 7.30 P.M., Mr. B. BJSANQUET, M.A., on "The Communication of Moral Ideas as a Function of an Ethical Society."

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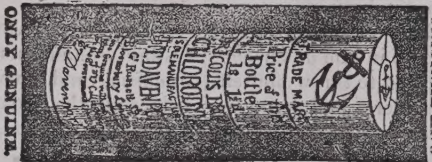
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